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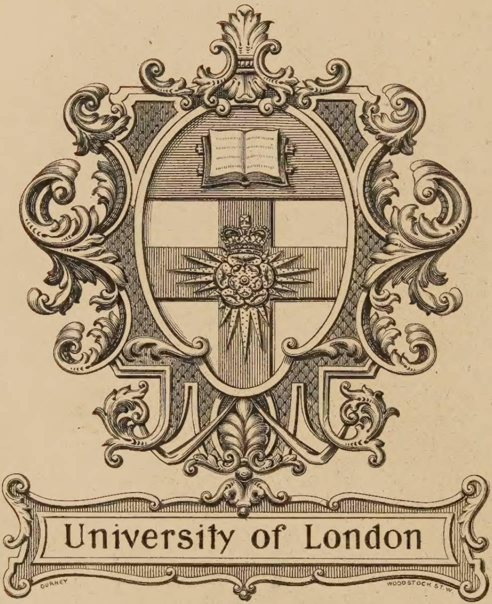

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

AUTHORISED EDITION.

FOURTH SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

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57 & 58 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME XXVIII.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM
THE THIRD DAY OF AUGUST
TO
THE EIGHTEENTH DAY OF AUGUST,
1894.

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"That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next,"

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Nautical Assessors (Scotland) Bill (No. 193)—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

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Question proposed, "That the words 'half-yearly' be there inserted."

After short Debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

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"At their discretion with a view to equalise as far as possible the burden of local taxation in different parts of London, having regard nevertheless to the following considerations:—

(a) The amount of the local rates in each individual parish in relation to the average rates for the whole of London;

(b) The circumstances of the local rates in each parish, and whether they are especially high on account of some expenditure specially local and beneficial mainly to the individual parish;

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Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill (No. 316)—Read the third time, and passed.

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Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c. Canals) Bill (No. 185)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c. Canals) Bill (No. 186)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal) Bill (No. 187)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.) Bill (No. 188)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 8) (River Cam, &c.) Bill (No. 189)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Canals of the Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill (No. 190)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Amendments made: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 12) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill (No. 191)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Amendments made: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next 237

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The Lord Steward (*M. Breadalbane*)—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

Tenants Arbitration (Ireland) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next: (The Earl Spencer.) (No. 203.)

COMMONS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 7.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [*Lords*] (No. 307)—

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," in order to add the words "re-committed in respect of paragraph 16 of the Croydon Tramways Extension Order,"—(*Mr. Snape*,)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'now read the third time' stand part of the Question" 238

Question put, and *negatived*.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to*.

Bill re-committed; considered in Committee.

Amendment proposed, in paragraph 16, page 19, line 31, after "mile," insert

"but it shall not be lawful, without the consent of the Local Authority, for the promoters of any Company or person working or using the tramways to take or demand on Sunday or on any bank or other public holiday any higher rates or charges than those levied by them on ordinary week days,"—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Amendment *agreed to*.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

QUESTIONS.

LIFE-SAVING APPARATUS—Question, Mr. Luttrell; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce).

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Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Arbitration Bill (No. 346) *changed to* **Tenants Arbitration (Ireland) Bill**

Order for Third Reading read.

Amendment proposed, in the title, after the word "(Ireland)" to insert the words "Migration and,"—(*Sir R. T. Reid.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months,"—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question" ... 280

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 199; Noes 167.—(Division List, No. 213) 363

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Merchant Shipping (*re-committed*) **Bill (No. 321)**—COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 30th July*].

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

After short Debate, Clause *agreed to* 366

Bill reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

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Housing of the Working Classes (Borrowing Powers) Bill (No. 336)—
Order for Second Reading read.
After short Debate, Second Reading deferred till Thursday 367

Diseases of Animals [*changed from* "**Contagious Diseases (Animals)**"] (*re-committed*) **Bill (No. 260)**—COMMITTEE—
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Locomotive Threshing Engines Bill (No. 292)—Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (ACCOMMODATION)—
Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, and an Appendix, brought up, and read.
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Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 345)**—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

Convention of Royal Burghs (Scotland) Act (1879) Amendment Bill (No. 339)—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Juries (Ireland) Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Ross, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Dane:*)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 350.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [EXPENSES]—
Considered in Committee.
(In the Committee.)
Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Local Government Board for Scotland in the execution of their duties, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session, to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland.
Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 8.

MOTION.

Great Western and Midland Railway Companies Bill [*Lords*]—
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Standing Order 213 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Dr. Farquharson*) 369
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After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* 370
Bill read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

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Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill (No. 124)—Committee. [*Progress, 6th August.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 26, after the word "district," to insert the words—

"Provided always that, unless the sanitary rates in a sanitary district shall on the average of the last three years have exceeded or fallen short of the average sanitary rate (hereinafter defined) by at least sixpence in the pound, such district and the parishes therein shall not be liable to contribute, or entitled to receive, any sum to or from the Equalisation Fund for the year,"—(*Sir J. Lubbock.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After Debate, Question put, and *negatived* 375

After Debate, and several Amendments proposed and disposed of,

Bill reported; as amended to be considered upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 351.] 403

Building Societies (No. 2) Bill (No. 246)—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [6th August] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended by the Standing Committee.

After Debate, and several Amendments proposed and disposed of,

Bill read the third time, and passed 409

Local Government (Scotland) [Expenses]—

Resolution reported,

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Local Government Board for Scotland in the execution of their duties, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session, to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland" 410

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Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 337)—

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After Debate, and several Amendments proposed and disposed of,

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Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 421

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 42; Noes 177.—(Division List, No. 214) 422

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Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill— 481

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to the Congested Districts Board for Ireland,"—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to* 483

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Morley and Mr. A. J. Balfour.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 353.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 337)—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [8th August] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended.

And which Amendment was, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the word "three," and insert the word "five,"—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Bill."

After Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* 487

After several Amendments proposed and disposed of,

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 5, leave out Sub-section (2), of Clause 9, and insert the words—

"(2) For the purposes of the first election of Parish Councils, the various authorities named in the preceding sub-section shall, before fixing the number and proportion of the Parish Councillors, consult with the Parochial Boards, and with such other Local Authorities as may appear to be concerned, in each parish. And, as regards any subse-

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL—*continued.*

quent alterations of numbers or proportion of Parish Councillors, no change shall be made without consultation with the Parish Councils, and such other Local Authorities as may appear to the Board to be concerned. In any case of difference of opinion among Local Authorities, the decision of the Board shall be final,"—(*Captain Hope*) 488

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2), of Clause 9, stand part of the Bill" 489

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Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided :—Ayes 66 ; Noes 140.—(Division List, No. 215.)

Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 16, after the word "divided," to insert the words—

"And in the case of parishes partly burghal and partly landward the value of property therein,"—(*Mr. Renshaw*) 493

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided :—Ayes 62 ; Noes 142.—(Division List, No. 216.)

Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 39, to leave out the word "property," and insert the word "qualification,"—(*Mr. Hozier*) 503

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Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 19, after the word "electors," to insert the words

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Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 516

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Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 530

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Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

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It being Midnight, Further Proceeding stood adjourned.

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Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 342)**—

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Objection being taken to Further Proceeding,

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow 547

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 340)**—

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Objection being taken, Debate further adjourned till To-morrow.

Quarries Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 341)**—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to* 548

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HOUSE OF COMMONS (VACATING OF SEATS)—

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Prize Courts Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 311)**—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Irish Education Bill (No. 247)—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

Housing of the Working Classes (Borrowing Powers) Bill (No. 336)—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

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SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER)—

Ordered, "That the proceedings on the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House,"—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 337)—

Bill, as amended, further considered.

After Debate, and several Amendments proposed and disposed of,

Amendment proposed, in page 17, line 21, to leave out from the word "Parliament" to the end of paragraph (c), of Sub-section (7), of Clause 25,—(*Mr. Graham Murray*) 572

Question proposed, "That the words down to 'and,' in line 22, stand part of the Bill" 574

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 118; Noes 51.—(Division List, No. 223) 577

After Debate, and further Amendments proposed and disposed of,

Amendment proposed, in page 25, line 9, at the end, to insert the words—

"The provisions of this section with respect to the appointment of Trustees shall not apply to any charity until the expiration of 40 years from the date of the foundation thereof, or, in the case of a charity founded before the passing of this Act by a donor or by several donors any one of whom is living at the passing of this Act, until the expiration of 40 years from the passing of this Act, unless with the consent of the surviving donor or donors,"—(*Sir C. Pearson*) 597

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 599

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 43; Noes 118.—(Division List, No. 224) 600

Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 25, line 39, after the word "loan," to insert the words—

"Every Committee shall report its proceedings to the Parish Council by whom it was appointed,"—(*Mr. Renshaw*) 601

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 39; Noes 113.—(Division List, No. 225) 602

Amendment proposed, in page 26, line 35, to leave out from the word "by," to the word "the," in line 36,—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause" 606

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 97; Noes 38. —(Division List, No. 226) 611

Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 31, line 10, to leave out the word "ninepence," and insert the word "sixpence,"—(*Mr. Hozier*) 618

Question proposed, "That the word 'ninepence' stand part of the Bill" ... 620

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 108; Noes 30.—(Division List, No. 227) 623

Several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 34, line 13, after the word "passed," to insert the words

"except in the case of medical officers, who shall not be liable to dismissal without the right of appeal to the Board,"—(*Dr. Macgregor*) 630

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 631

After short Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 36; Noes 97.—(Division List, No. 228) 633

After Debate, several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Bill read the third time, and passed 636

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (No. 156)—

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

After Debate, several Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the word "the," to insert the words "increase of the,"—(*Mr. D. Plunket*) 637

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 638

After Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 72; Noes 32.—(Division List, No. 229) 643

After Debate, several further Amendments proposed and disposed of.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House 646

Committee report Progress.

Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill (No. 353)—

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to* 648

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 342)**—COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 9th August*] 649

Committee deferred till Monday next.

Elementary Education Bill (No. 302)—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [11th July.]

Objection being taken to Further Proceeding,

Order discharged; Bill withdrawn 650

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS (BETTERMENT)—

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House a Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Town Improvements (Betterment), with the Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence; and that the Clerk do carry the same,—(*Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.*)

MARKING OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE—

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House a Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Marking of Foreign and Colonial Produce, with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence; and that the Clerk do carry the same,—(*Mr. H. Gardner.*)

Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 354.]

Prize Courts Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 311)**—Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

Conciliation (Trade Disputes) Bill (No. 125)—Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [23rd April] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Housing of the Working Classes (Borrowing Powers) Bill (No. 336)—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Bill (No. 294)—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn 651

Copyhold Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 344)**—Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Convention of Royal Burghs (Scotland) Act (1879) Amendment Bill (No. 339)—Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Police Burghs (Scotland) Harbours Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Graham Murray, Captain Hope*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 355.]

LORDS, MONDAY, AUGUST 13.

Several Lords—Took the Oath.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—Motion for an Address—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of the Report from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, dated March 27, 1886; together with the Names of the Lords of the Committee making the said Report, and of witnesses examined and of parties heard by counsel before them,"—(*The Marquess of Salisbury*) 653

Motion *agreed to.*

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Crown Lands Bill (No. 199)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Rosebery*).

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

New Inland Revenue Affidavits—Question and Observations, The Duke of Rutland; Answer, The Lord President of the Council (The Earl of Rosebery) 654

Tenants Arbitration (Ireland) Bill (No. 203)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl Spencer.*)

Amendment moved, to leave out ("now"), and add at the end of the Motion ("this day three months,")—(*The Lord Balfour*) ... 666

After Debate,

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*The Duke of Devonshire*) 754

Motion *agreed to;* further Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.] **(No. 163)**—Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Nautical Assessors (Scotland) Bill (No. 193)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (No. 194)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS (BETTERMENT)—
Messages from the Commons for Reports, &c. of Select Committees: Ordered to be communicated accordingly.

MARKING OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE—
Messages from the Commons for Reports, &c. of Select Committees: Ordered to be communicated accordingly 755

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Lagan, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 197)—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 4) (Birmingham Canal) Bill (No. 198)—

Moved, That the Order made on the 19th day of March last—

"That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next"

be dispensed with, and that the Bills be read 2^a; *agreed to;* Bills read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of the Great Northern and certain other Railway Companies) Bill (No. 184)—Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 186)—Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal) Bill (No. 187)—Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

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Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.) Bill (No. 188)—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 8) (River Cam, &c.) Bill (No. 189)—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill, *now* **Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill (No. 190)**—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 756

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 12) (Grand Canals, &c.) Bill, *now* **Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill (No. 191)**—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Prize Courts Bill [H.L.] **(No. 56)**—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; Commons Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord President [*E. Rosebery.*]) (No. 207.)

Building Societies (No. 2) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord Chancellor). (No. 208.)

Housing of the Working Classes (Borrowing Powers) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord Hawkesbury). (No. 209.)

Local Government (Scotland) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow: (The Lord Privy Seal [*L. Tweedmouth.*]) (No. 210.)

Merchant Shipping Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord Chancellor). (No. 204) 757

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 6) (River Lee, &c.) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 211.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

Ordered, That the Evening Sitting of the House To-morrow do commence at half-past Four o'clock.

COMMONS, MONDAY, AUGUST 13.

QUESTIONS.

POLICE ASSISTANCE TO A "PLANTER"—Question, Dr. D. Ambrose; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).

DROWNED IN THE RIVER FFRWD—Question, Mr. D. Thomas; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) ... 758

ALLEGED DIMINUTION IN INCOMES OF NATIONAL TEACHERS—Questions, Mr. Knox, Mr. T. W. Russell; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 759

BELFAST POST OFFICE—Questions, Mr. Arnold-Forster; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) 760

THE EX-CHIEF CONSTABLE OF WARWICKSHIRE—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) 761

THE DUBLIN DRAINAGE SCHEME—Questions, Mr. Ross; Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Woodall).

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Railway Rates at Boyle—Questions, Mr. Bodkin; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce) 762
Behar Cadastral Survey—Question, Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) 763
Annual Leave in the Post Office—Questions, Mr. Cohen; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley) 764
Alleged Wrongful Imprisonment at Leigh—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).
The Military Contribution of the Straits Settlements—Question, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) 765
Water Supply to Parliamentary Committee Corridors—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) 766
Reach National School, Swaffham's Prior—Question, Sir F. S. Powell; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland).
The Police and the Bothwell Park Miners—Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) ... 767
The Tuberculosis Commission—Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre).
Ventilation at St. Stephen's—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) 768
The Indian Budget—Questions, Mr. Buchanan, Sir W. Houldsworth, Mr. Tomlinson; Answers, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler).
Denunciation of Land-Grabbers in County Roscommon—Questions, Mr. W. Kenny, Mr. Bodkin; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 769
Level Crossings on the Belfast and County Down Railway—Question, Mr. Rentoul; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce).
The Wigan Police and Public Meetings—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) 770
Government Printing Contracts and the Fair Wages Resolution—Question, Mr. Woods; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).
The Crofters Act Amendment Bill—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) 771
Hever Schools—Questions, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen; Answers, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland) 772
Clashmore Constabulary Barrack—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 773
Strabane Rate Collection—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
Refusal to Grant an Arms Licence—Question, Captain Donelan; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 774
Harvest Weather Forecasts—Question, Mr. Hugh Hoare; Answer, The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. H. Gardner).
The Irish Land and Migration Company—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 775
The South Meath Polling Lists—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Dodd; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
Lowestoft Schools and the Education Department—Question, Mr. H. Foster; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland) ... 777
The Course of Business—Statement thereon, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt); Questions, Sir M. Hicks Beach, Sir F. S. Powell, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Cohen; Answers, Sir W. Harcourt.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill (No. 351)—

Bill, as amended, considered 779

Several Amendments *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and passed 785

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (No. 156)—COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 10th August.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 22, after the word "mentioned," to insert the words

"but the Board of Trade may, if they think fit, extend the said period of six months with respect to any complaints made to them during that period."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* 796

Several further Amendments *agreed to.*

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 356.] 800

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill (No. 10)—COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 30th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

After Debate, several Amendments proposed and disposed of.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, to insert the words—

"In any county in which a majority of the workmen employed underground in the mines therein shall so resolve, in manner hereinafter provided, and so long as such resolution shall remain unrescinded,"—(*Mr. D. Thomas*) 816

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted" 831

After Debate, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House 876

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

Diseases of Animals [*changed from* **"Contagious Diseases (Animals)"**] (*re-committed*) **Bill (No. 348)—**

Bill considered in Committee 877

(In the Committee.)

After short Debate, Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow 878

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill (No. 353)—

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

After short Debate, Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

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Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 342)**—
Order for Committee read 879
After short Debate,
Bill considered in Committee.
(In the Committee.)
After Debate, Amendments *agreed to* 882
Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Copyhold (Consolidation) Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 344)**—
Bill considered in Committee.
(In the Committee.)
After Debate, several Amendments *agreed to.*
Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Thursday ... 884

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 340)**—
Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [2nd August].
After short Debate, Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, Debate further adjourned till To-morrow 885

Quarries Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 341)**—
Bill considered in Committee.
(In the Committee.)
After short Debate, Amendments *agreed to.*
Bill reported, with Amendments; as amended, to be considered To-morrow 887

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS—
Ordered, That the several Accounts and Papers which have been presented to the House in this Session of Parliament, relating to the Revenues of India, be referred to the consideration of a Committee of the Whole House.
Resolved, That this House will To-morrow resolve itself into the said Committee,—(*Mr. Secretary Fowler.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—
That they have agreed to.
Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill,
Changed from—
Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill.
Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill,
Changed from—
Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 12) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill, with Amendments.

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) [EXPENSES]—
Order for Committee thereupon read, and discharged 888

Larceny Act Amendment Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 338)**—Order for Second Reading read and discharged.
Bill withdrawn.

Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 354)**—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Expiring Laws Continuance Bill (No. 349)—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Rivers Pollution Prevention Bill (No. 95)—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) [Remuneration]—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to any persons appointed or employed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make further provision with respect to the Congested Districts Board for Ireland,—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Sittings of the House (Exemption from the Standing Order)—Notice in regard thereto,—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

LORDS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 14.

New Peer—The Right Honourable Sir Horace Davey, Knight, one of the Lord Justices of Appeal, having been appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary under the provisions of the Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876, with the dignity of a Baron for life, by the style and title of Baron Davey of Fernhurst in the county of Sussex, was (in the usual manner) introduced 889

Aliens Bill—Question and Observations, The Marquess of Londonderry, The Marquess of Salisbury, The Lord Chancellor (Lord Herschell).

Business of the House—Question, The Earl of Camperdown; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury and Lord President of the Council (The Earl of Rosebery) 890

The New Inland Revenue Affidavits—Return relating thereto moved for (*The Duke of Rutland*) 891

Motion *agreed to.*

Chairman of Committees—

Moved—

"That the Lord Kensington be appointed to take the Chair in Committee of the Whole House this day in the absence of the Chairman of Committees,"—(The Lord Privy Seal [*Lord Tweedmouth*].)

Motion *agreed to.*

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 4) (Birmingham Canal) Bill (No. 198)—House in Committee (according to Order).

Amendments made; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 892

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 185)—Bill read 3ª (according to Order).

Amendments *agreed to.*

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Crown Lands Bill (No. 199)—

House in Committee (according to Order).

After short Debate, Bill reported without Amendment 893

Standing Committee *negatived*, and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

Tenants Arbitration (Ireland) Bill (No. 203)—
Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Amendment to the Motion for the Second Reading read.
Debate resumed accordingly.
After Debate, on Question whether the word ("now") shall stand part of the Motion?
Their Lordships divided:—Contents 30; Not-Contents 249 ... 979
Resolved in the negative; and Bill to be read 2ª this day three months.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Lagan, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 191)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Amendments made.

Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 210)—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill (No. 202)—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

COMMONS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 14.

QUESTIONS.

THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL—Questions, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce).
LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE EDENDERRY UNION—Questions, Mr. Kennedy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 981
BURIAL BOARDS FEES—Question, Mr. Carvell Williams; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... 982
MASTER OF DOCKYARD TUGS—Questions, Admiral Field; Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. E. Robertson) 983
RATLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland).
WAGES ON GOVERNMENT FARMS—Question, Mr. Everett; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) 984
ATTACKS ON IRISH HARVESTERS IN ENGLAND—Questions, Mr. Weir, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) 985
THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF MILITARY CANDIDATES—Questions, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Woodall) 987
ST. JAMES'S SCHOOL, BERMONDSEY—Questions, Mr. Macdona; Answers, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland) 988
VICTORIA VICTUALLING YARD, DEPTFORD—Questions, Mr. Macdona; Answers, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. E. Robertson) ... 989
FISHERY CRUISERS ROUND THE ISLAND OF LEWIS—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) 990
ALDERSHOT WATER SUPPLY—Questions, Mr. Bartley; Answers, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Woodall) 991
THE MERCANTILE MARINE FUND—Question, Sir M. Hicks-Beach; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce).
FARNHAM TITHE DISPUTE—Question, Mr. Jeffreys; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert) 992
ASHTON-UNDER-LYME SEWAGE SCHEME—Question, Mr. Sidebotham; Answer, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) 993

WATER SUPPLY TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—Questions, Mr. Weir; Answers, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).

JABEZ BALFOUR—Question, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) 994

PROMOTION IN THE CUSTOMS SERVICE—Question, Mr. M. Austin; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir J. T. Hibbert).

THE WARINA INCIDENT—Questions, Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett, Mr. J. W. Lowther; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey).

THE BOTHWELL PARK DISTURBANCE—Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The Secretary for Scotland (Sir G. Trevelyan) 995

THE CROFTERS' ACTS AMENDMENT BILL—Questions, Mr. Weir, Dr. Clark, Mr. Tomlinson, Dr. Macgregor; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) 996

GRANTS TO SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Talbot; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Acland).

SMALL-POX AT COVENTRY—Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Sir W. Foster) ... 997

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL—Question, Mr. Hopwood; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... 998

DR. CORNELIUS HERZ—Question, Mr. Scott-Montagu; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith).

TORPEDO BOAT DESTROYERS—Question, Mr. Macdonald; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth) 999

THE CASE OF EMILY CULLIFORD—Question, Mr. Burnie; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) ... 1000

MOTION.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER)—

Motion made, and Question put,

"That the proceedings on the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order Sittings of the House,"—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes 91; Noes 52.—(Division List, No. 230.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill (No. 10)—COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 13th August.*]

Bill considered in Committee 1001

(In the Committee.)

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the last Amendment, to leave out the words—

"In any county in which a majority of the workmen employed underground in the mines therein shall so resolve in manner hereinafter provided, and so long as such resolution shall remain unrescinded,"—(*Mr. D. Thomas.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out, in line 1, the word "county," and insert the words "district as hereinafter determined,"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL—*continued.*

Question proposed, "That the word 'county' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question proposed,

"That the words 'In any district as hereinafter determined in which a majority of the workmen employed underground in the mines therein shall so resolve in manner hereinafter provided, and so long as such resolution shall remain unrescinded' be there inserted" 1003

After Debate, Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 1, after the word "majority," to insert the words "of two-thirds,"—(*Mr. J. A. Pease*) 1016

Question proposed, "That the words 'of two-thirds' be there inserted in the proposed Amendment" 1020

After short Debate, Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, withdrawn 1022

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

After Debate, Mr. Woods (Lancashire, Ince) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put" 1046

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes 120 ; Noes 98.—(Division List, No. 231.)

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided :—Ayes 112 ; Noes 107.—(Division List, No. 232) 1047

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. J. Chamberlain.*)

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS—

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair :"—

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—Resolution—

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"In the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens ; the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure ; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India,"—(*Mr. S. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question" 1072

After Debate, it being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned ... 1075

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (No. 156)—

Bill, as amended, considered.

After short Debate, Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned 1076

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

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Diseases of Animals [*changed from* "Contagious Diseases (Animals)"] **Bill (No. 348)—**

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of Clauses 24 and 25,"—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question" 1079

After short Debate, Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned 1080

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 354)—**

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

After short Debate, Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Sir J. Rigby.*)

Motion *agreed to* 1081

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

Expiring Laws Continuance Bill (No. 349)—

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

After short Debate, Bill reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 340)—**

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd August] "That the Bill be now read a second time."

After short Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* 1082

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Quarries Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 341)—**

Bill, as amended, considered.

After short Debate, Bill read the third time, and passed.

Tramways (Ireland) Bill—

After short Debate, *Ordered* (*Sir J. T. Hibbert, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. J. Morley*:)—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 359] 1083

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill (No. 265)—Lords Amendments *agreed to.*

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill (No. 267)—Lords Amendments *agreed to.*

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—

That they have agreed to,—

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals) Bill.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—*continued.*

Town Improvements (Betterment),—That they communicate Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Town Improvements (Betterment), with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence, as desired by this House.

Marking of Foreign and Colonial Produce,—That they communicate Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Marking of Foreign and Colonial Produce, with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence, as desired by this House.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill (No. 353)—Considered in Committee, and reported; Bill re-committed, in respect of Clauses 1 and 3; considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow 1084

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 342)**—As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

Juries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (No. 350)—Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill—*Ordered (Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir-Hardie, Mr. William Allen, Dr. Clark, Mr. Byles:)*—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 357.]

Crofters Acts (Inclusion of Leaseholders) Bill—*Ordered (Dr. Clark, Mr. Weir, Dr. Macgregor:)*—Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 358.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION]—

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to any persons appointed or employed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make further provision with respect to the Congested Districts Board for Ireland."

Resolution *agreed to.*

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS — THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA—Resolution—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [14th August], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"In the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens; the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India,"—(*Mr. S. Smith.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question" 1085

Debate resumed.

After Debate, Amendment, by leave, withdrawn 1149

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 340)**—

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

After short Debate, Amendments *agreed to;* Bill to be reported To-morrow 1150

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 198)—Lords Amendments *agreed to.*

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill (No. 10)—Order for Committee read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill—As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (No. 156)—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [14th August] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended.

And which Amendment was, in page 2, line 1, after the word "force," to insert the words

"or if that rate or charge is higher than the rate or charge in force on the last day of December one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, then such sum as would have been payable on the footing of the last-mentioned rate or charge,"—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question put, and *agreed to* 1151

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Juries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (No. 350)—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Bill read the third time, and passed.

Plumbers' Registration Bill (No. 84)—Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time," read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms (House of Commons)—

Leave given to the Select Committee to report their Observations to the House.

Report, with Observations, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 297.]

Business of the House (Government Business)—

Statement thereon, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt); after Debate, it being Six of the Clock, Mr. Speaker left the Chair without Question put.

LORDS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 16.

Building Societies (No. 2) Bill (No. 208)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read 1153

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to* 1156

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill (No. 207)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

After Debate, Motion *agreed to* 1164

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Housing of the Working Classes (Borrowing Powers) Bill (No. 209)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Hawkesbury.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

Merchant Shipping Bill (No. 204)—

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow 1165

Uniforms Bill (No. 175)—

Bill read 3^a (according to Order).

An Amendment *agreed to.*

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Crown Lands Bill (No. 199)—

The Queen's consent signified; Bill read 3^a (according to Order) ... 1166

Verbal Amendment *agreed to.*

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 210)—

House in Committee (according to Order).

After Debate, Several Amendments *agreed to.*

Amendment moved, to leave out Sub-section (c),—(*The Marquess of Huntly*) 1185

On question? whether sub-section (c) shall stand part of the clause,

Their Lordships divided:—Contents 16; Not-Contents 38 ... 1186

After Debate, Further Amendments *agreed to.*

Amendment moved, in page 23, line 34, after ("persons,") insert ("not exceeding the number of such trustees"), — (*The Marquess of Huntly*) 1201

After short Debate, on question? their Lordships divided:—Contents 34; Not-Contents 17 1203

Further Amendments *agreed to.*

Amendment moved, in page 25, at the end of the Clause, insert the following:—

"The provisions of this section with respect to the appointment of trustees shall not apply to any charity until the expiration of 40 years from the date of the foundation thereof, or, in the case of a charity founded before the passing of this Act by a donor, or by several donors, any one of whom is living at the passing of this Act, until the expiration of 40 years from the passing of this Act, unless with the consent of the surviving donor or donors. Nothing contained in this section shall apply to the funds

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL—*continued.*

derived from the ordinary church collections in parish churches, but such funds shall belong to and be at the disposal of the Kirk Session of each parish, and the portion of the same to be applied in relief of the poor shall be in the discretion of the Kirk Session,"—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

After short Debate, on Question ? their Lordships divided :—Contents 36 ; Not-Contents 16 1207

After Debate, further Amendments *agreed to.*

The Report of the Amendments to be received To-morrow ; and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with ; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 212) 1214

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 185)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill (No. 190)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill (No. 191)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [H.L.] **(No. 178)**—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Quarries Bill [H.L.] **(No. 149)**—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments : The said Amendments to be considered To-morrow.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]—Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Lagan, &c., Canals) Bill, *now* **Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Lagan, &c., Canals) Bill (No. 197)**—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1215

Canals Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 4) (Birmingham Canal) Bill (No. 198)—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 6) (River Lee, &c.) Bill (No. 211)—

Moved, That the Order made on the 19th day of March last—

"That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next,"

be dispensed with, and that the Bill be read 2ª ; agreed to ; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill (No. 202)—House in Committee (according to Order) : Bill reported without Amendment ; Amendments made ; Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill—Read 1ª ; to be printed ; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 215.)

Juries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill—Read 1ª ; to be printed ; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 216.)

Expiring Laws Continuance Bill—Read 1ª ; to be printed ; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 217.)

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill—Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª Tomorrow. (No. 218.)

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [H.L.]—Commons Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to 1216

COMMONS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 16.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Von Roemer's Resumption of British Nationality Bill [*Lords*] (*by Order*)—
Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

After short Debate, Motion *agreed to*; Bill read a second time, and committed 1220

Ordered, That Standing Orders 211 and 236 be suspended, and that the Committee have leave to sit and proceed forthwith,—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS—Amendments thereon,—(*The Chairman of Committees*) *agreed to.*

QUESTIONS.

THE IMPORTATION OF GERMAN PRISON-MADE GOODS—Questions, Colonel Howard Vincent; Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce) 1221

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BRITISH SOLDIERS AND THE PLAGUE AT HONG KONG—Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Woodall) 1224

THE TREATMENT OF FIRST OFFENDERS—Question, Colonel Howard Vincent; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Asquith) 1225

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MOTION.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, for the remainder of the Session, Government Business be not interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Orders regulating the Sittings of the House; and may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government Business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put,"—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 1258

After Debate, Question put:—The House divided:—Ayes 130; Noes 33.—(Division List, No. 233) 1271

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1893, was Rx.90,172,438; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.91,005,850; that there was an excess of Expenditure over Revenue of Rx.833,412; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,986,290,"—(*Mr. Secretary Fowler.*)

After Debate, Question put, and *agreed to* 1349

Resolution to be reported To-morrow 1350

Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 354)**—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to.*

Clause 3.

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL—*continued.*

After Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 58; Noes none.—(Division List, No. 234) 1353

Remaining Clauses and Schedule *agreed to.*

Bill reported, with an Amendment; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

Burials Bill (No. 33)—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—

That they have agreed to—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of the Great Northern and certain other Railway Companies) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c. Canals) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.) Bill,

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Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 4) (Birmingham Canal) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Lagan, &c. Canals) Bill,

Changed from—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Lagan, &c. Canals) Bill, with Amendments,

Uniforms Bill, with an Amendment.

Diseases of Animals (No. 348) [*changed from* **"Contagious Diseases (Animals)"**] **Bill**—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [14th August], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of Clauses 24 and 25,"—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Copyhold Consolidation Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 344)**—As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 340)**—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Tramways (Ireland) Bill (No. 359)—Read a second time, and committed for Saturday.

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) [REDEMPTION]—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland by payment of a capital sum, to authorise the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow 1355

LORDS, FRIDAY, AUGUST 17.

COMMISSION—

The following Bills received the Royal Assent :—

Charitable Trusts Acts Amendment 1357

Industrial Schools.

British Museum (Purchase of Land).

Locomotive Threshing Engines.

Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Acts Amendment.

Nautical Assessors (Scotland).

Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts Amendment.

Prize Courts.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1).

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2).

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15).

Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London).

Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Barry, &c.).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of the Great Northern and certain other Railway Companies).

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals).

Canals Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c. Canals).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 8) (River Cam, &c.).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies).

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.).

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES—

Moved—

"That the Lord Privy Seal (*Lord Tweedmouth*) do take the Chair this day in Committee of the Whole House in the absence of the Chairman of Committees."—(*The Marquess of Ripon*) 1358

Motion *agreed to.*

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Local Government (Scotland) Bill (No. 212)—
Amendments reported (according to Order).
After Discussion, several Amendments *agreed to.*
Bill passed, and returned to the Commons 1366

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION AND EVICTED FARMS—Question and Observations, The Earl of Courtown; Answer, Lord Monkswell.

Marine Insurance Bill—*Presented* (*The Lord Chancellor*); read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 219) 1367

Equalisation of Rates (London) Bill (No. 207)—
House in Committee (according to Order) 1368
After Debate, Bill reported, without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next 1370

Building Societies (No. 2) Bill (No. 208)—
House in Committee (according to Order).
After Debate, several Amendments *agreed to.*
Standing Committee negatived; The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next 1373

ALLEGED PERJURY IN THE DUBLIN BANKRUPTCY COURT—Question and Observations, Lord Cloncurry; Answer, Lord Monkswell.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill (No. 215)—
Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read 1374
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)
Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next 1376

Juries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill (No. 216)—
Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)
Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Railway and Canal Traffic Bill (No. 218)—
Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)
Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next 1377

Copyhold Consolidation Bill [H.L.] **(No. 171)**—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment.

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 153)**—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Uniforms Bill (No. 175)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendment agreed to.

Chimney Sweepers Bill (No. 192)—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Housing of the Working Classes (Borrowing Powers) Bill (No. 209)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

Merchant Shipping Bill (No. 204)—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill (No. 202)—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments: further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Quarries Bill [H.L.] **(No. 149)**—Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

Expiring Laws Continuance Bill (No. 217)—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Diseases of Animals Bill—Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next (The Earl of Chesterfield). (No. 220) 1378

Copyhold (Consolidation) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 171)**—Commons Amendment considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill [H.L.] **(No. 153)**—Commons Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

COMMONS, FRIDAY, AUGUST 17.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to,—
Amendments to—
Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [Lords].
Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

ROYAL ASSENT—
Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—
The House went;—and being returned;—
Mr. Speaker reported the Royal Assent to several Acts,—(For list see under Lords).

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to,—
Local Government (Scotland) Bill 1379
Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill.

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH TRADE IN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REPUBLICS—Question, Mr. Hozier; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey).
VENTILATION AT ST. STEPHEN'S—Question, Mr. Crombie; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. H. Gladstone) 1380
H.M.S. "BENBOW"—Question, Mr. Macdona; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth) 1381
BOYCOTTING IN DUBLIN—Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
CONSTABULARY DUTY IN WEXFORD—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 1382
THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley).
NEW ROAD IN COUNTY MAYO—Question, Mr. Clancy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 1383

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ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT, WOOLWICH—Question, Mr. Keir-Hardie; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Woodall).
THE WILSON TARIFF—Question, Major Jones; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir E. Grey) 1384
BUNKER COALS—Question, Major Jones; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce) 1385
RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN INDIA—Question, Sir R. Temple; Answer, The Secretary of State for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler).
HOUSE OF COMMONS WATER SUPPLY—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. H. Gladstone) 1386
H.M.S. "NORTHAMPTON"—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth).
THE VICTORIA INCIDENT IN MASHONALAND—Question, Mr. Byles; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) ... 1387
CITY OF LONDON FISH TOLLS—Question, Sir A. Rollit; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Bryce).
THE STRABANE REGISTER—Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Bartley; Answers, Mr. Speaker 1388
THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS—Questions, Mr. Henniker Heaton; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton).
INTERNATIONAL REPLY LETTER CARDS—Question, Captain Norton; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. A. Morley).
ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL—Question, Mr. A. C. Morton; Answer, The Parliamentary Charity Commissioner (Mr. F. S. Stevenson) ... 1389
THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL—Questions, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Barton, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Macartney; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley); The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir W. Harcourt) 1390
THE SOUTH MEATH REGISTER—Question, Mr. T. M. Healy; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Morley) 1391

NEW MEMBER SWORN—Lord Edmund Talbot, for the County of Sussex (South-Western or Chichester Division). 1392

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY,—*considered* in Committee.
(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (ESTIMATES), 1894-5.

CLASS I.

1. £11,564, to complete the sum for Harbours in the United Kingdom and Lighthouses Abroad under the Board of Trade.
After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1395
2. Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That a sum, not exceeding £21,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for constructing a new Harbour of Refuge at Peterhead" 1396
After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1397
3. Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That a sum, not exceeding £137,482, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for Rates and Contributions in lieu of Rates, &c., in respect of Government Property, and for the Salaries and Expenses of the Rating of Government Property Departments."
After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1409

SUPPLY—*continued.*

4. £109,149, to complete the sum for Public Works and Buildings, Ireland.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1419

5. £32,778, to complete the sum for Railways, Ireland 1420

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1423

CLASS II.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,595, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the House of Lords."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That '£2,595,' be granted for the said Service,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy*) 1424

After Debate, Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 58; Noes 67.—(Division List, No. 235) 1431

Original Question put:—The Committee divided:—Ayes 66; Noes 57.—(Division List, No. 236.)

7. £28,133, to complete the sum for House of Commons Offices.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1432

8. £48,476, to complete the sum for Treasury and Subordinate Departments 1433

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1434

9. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £60,863, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."

After Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1459

10. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £40,696, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

After Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1481

11. £7,528, to complete the sum for Privy Council Office.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1482

12. £23,380, to complete the sum for Charity Commission, *agreed to.*

13. £22,071, to complete the sum for Civil Service Commission, *agreed to.*

14. £34,444, to complete the sum for Exchequer and Audit Department, *agreed to.*

15. £4,186 (including a supplementary sum of £1,000), to complete the sum for Friendly Societies Registry, *agreed to.*

16. £9,219, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, England, *agreed to.*

17. £84, to complete the sum for the Mint, including Coinage, *agreed to.*

18. £7,452, to complete the sum for National Debt Office, *agreed to.*

19. £12,017, to complete the sum for Public Record Office, *agreed to.*

20. £5,659, to complete the sum for Public Works Loan Commission, *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*] **(No. 354)**—

Bill, as amended, considered.

After Debate, several Amendments *agreed to*

Bill read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1487

Chimney Sweepers Bill (No. 277)—Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to 1488

Uniforms Bill (No. 309)—Lords Amendment to be considered forthwith; considered and agreed to.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1892-3—

Committee to consider the Savings and Deficiencies upon Navy and Army Grants for 1892-3, and the temporary sanction obtained from the Treasury by the Navy and Army Departments to the Expenditure not provided for in the Grants for that year To-morrow.

Ordered, That the Appropriation Accounts for the Navy and Army Departments, which were presented upon the 15th day of February last, be referred to the Committee,—(*Sir John Hibbert.*)

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) [REDEMPTION]—

Resolution reported;

"That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland by payment of a capital sum, to authorise the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the Service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883."

Resolution *agreed to.*

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS—

Resolution reported;

"That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1893, was Rx.90,172,438; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.91,005,850; that there was an excess of Expenditure over Revenue of Rx.833,412; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,986,290."

Resolution *agreed to.*

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 16th August, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put till To-morrow.

COMMONS, SATURDAY, AUGUST 18.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

London Streets and Buildings Bill (*by Order*)—

Order for consideration of Lords' Amendments, read 1489

After short Debate, Lords' Amendments *agreed to.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY,—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1894-95. 1490

CLASS II.

1. £22,460, to complete the sum for Colonial Office.

After Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1510

SUPPLY—*continued.*

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £100,757, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments."

After Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1545

3. £21,000, to complete the sum for Mercantile Marine Fund (Grant in aid), *agreed to.*

4. £20, to complete the sum for Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to.*

5. £30,510, to complete the sum for Board of Agriculture.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1554

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £90,145, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1558

7. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £272,505, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for Stationery, Printing, and Paper, Binding, and Printed Books for the Public Service, and for the Salaries and Expenses of the Stationery Office; and for Sundry Miscellaneous Services, including Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

After Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1581

8. £11,743, to complete the sum for Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, &c., Office.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1588

9. £28,566, to complete the sum for Works and Public Buildings Office.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to.*

10. £16,000, to complete the sum for Secret Service.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1589

11. £3,155, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, Scotland, *agreed to.*

12. £2,470, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Scotland, *agreed to.*

13. £4,754, to complete the sum for Board of Supervision for Relief of the Poor, and for Public Health, Scotland, *agreed to.*

14. £2,264, to complete the sum for Household of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, *agreed to.*

15. £939, to complete the sum for Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland, *agreed to.*

16. £3,007, to complete the sum for Public Record Office, Ireland, *agreed to.*

17. £19,770, to complete the sum for Public Works Office, Ireland, *agreed to.*

18. £8,637, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Ireland, *agreed to.*

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SUPPLY—*continued.*

19. £5,171, to complete the sum for Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland, *agreed to.*

CLASS III.

20. £25,782 (including a Supplementary sum of £3,000), to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses, *agreed to.*

21. £177,874, to complete the sum for Supreme Court of Judicature, *agreed to.*

22. £3,771, to complete the sum for Land Registry, *agreed to.*

23. £18,062, to complete the sum for County Courts, *agreed to.*

24. £2,748, to complete the sum for Police Courts, London and Sheerness, *agreed to.*

25. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £34,435, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the Pay and Expenses of Officers of Metropolitan Police employed on special duties, and the Salaries and Expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary" 1590

After Debate, Vote *agreed to* 1597

26. £361,139, to complete the sum for Prisons, England and the Colonies.

After short Debate, Vote *agreed to.*

27. £137,117, to complete the sum for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain, *agreed to* 1598

28. £18,903, to complete the sum for Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum, *agreed to.*

29. £44,998, to complete the sum for Law Charges and Courts of Law, Scotland, *agreed to.*

30. £22,711, to complete the sum for Register House, Edinburgh, *agreed to.*

31. £51,700, to complete the sum for Prisons, Scotland, *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1892-3—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolutions and Schedules in regard thereto *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next 1602

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 16th August, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(*Authorised Edition*)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT* OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*
APPOINTED TO MEET 12 MARCH 1894, IN THE FIFTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF
THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SEVENTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1894.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 3rd August 1894.

OPIUM COMMISSION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH asked Her Majesty's Government whether the Report of the Royal Commission on Opium and its use in India was likely to be communicated to Parliament before the close of the present Session; and, if not, whether they could state the reason for the delay? He would not make a speech, having put down the question purely to obtain the information there asked. He understood—if wrongly the noble Lord the Chairman of the Commission could correct him—that the evidence having been completed in India in the early spring, the Commissioners had returned home in April. He had seen no notice of evidence to be taken in this country, and as the end of the Session was approaching, and there might be difficulties in getting the members of the Commission together again, it seemed not unfair to ask whether there was any hope of their deliberations being put an end to, and of the Report being printed and circulated before the termination of the present Session of Parliament.

***LORD BRASSEY** said, Lord Reay had asked him as Chairman of the Commission to reply to the question, and state why it had been found impracticable to present the Report before the close of the Session. He could assure his noble Friend that the Commission had not been idle. It was appointed in Autumn last year. Its members met in London within a few days for the purpose of taking evidence. They assembled in Calcutta in November, and during 83 working days in India they held 70 sittings. To expedite the work a section only of the Commission visited Burma, while the other members continued their sittings in Calcutta. A similar arrangement was made during the tour of the Commission through the Bombay Presidency. The evidence taken was necessarily voluminous, and the printing of it and of the various important documents prepared for the use of the Commission by direction of the Government in India was attended with some difficulty. The work was commenced by the Indian Press in Calcutta, and was admirably done; but as the Commission pushed forward through the country their communications with Calcutta became more tedious, and it became necessary to change the printing operations to London. That involved some delay in the work, and the last sheets of the volumes had been in their hands only within the last month. Three volumes were printed in Calcutta and five in London. All those volumes of evidence were now before Parliament. Another cause of delay arose from communications having to be made with China and the Straits Settlements whence the transmission of replies to questions occupied some time. The Chinese evidence had been printed with the other volumes. Obviously it was impossible to complete the Draft Report until the whole of the evidence had been fully considered. The noble Lord might be assured that the draft had been proceeded with uninterruptedly. Nearly every section was now sufficiently completed for circulation to the members of the Commission, who hoped to present their Report next November.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 194.)

REPORT.

Amendments reported (according to Order).

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Lord TWEEDMOUTH) moved an Amendment to leave out the words "or by any Act amending the same" in Clause 1 as superfluous and misleading. By the principal Act it was clear that the maximum rate was 1d. in the £1; and the only statutory provision touching the matter was one for lowering the rate.

Amendment moved, in Clause 1, page 1, line 9, leave out ("or by any Act amending the same").—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

Amendment agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH proposed next to leave out Clause 7, and was very glad thereby to meet the objection of Lord Ashbourne. He had found already existing in the Libraries and Scientific Institutions Act, 1854, all the powers given by the clause, which was therefore entirely superfluous and unnecessary.

Amendment moved, in page 4, to leave out Clause 7.—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

LORD ASHBOURNE said, he would be sorry to have attributed to him any intention which he had not expressed. He had not the slightest objection to the substance of the clause, but only desired to point out that in the case of an owner giving part of his property for the purpose of a public library all the safeguards should be preserved. He had, therefore, suggested that the requirements of the Act passed in reference to the Technical Schools, 1892, should be adopted.

Amendment agreed to.

Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

CHIMNEY SWEEPERS BILL.—(No. 192.)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) moved to leave out Subsection 2. Section 3, which had been inserted at the suggestion of the Government draftsman for the purpose of enabling certain Statutes to be cited by their short titles. On consideration, that appeared to have been already done under the "Short Titles Act," and therefore the sub-section had better be omitted. It was merely a formal Amendment, and did not affect the substance of the clause.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH did not think he incurred any responsibility on behalf of Lord Dunraven, who was in charge of the Bill, in assenting to that arrangement after the explanation which had been given by the noble Lord.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL [H.L.]. (No. 161.)

Reported from the Joint Committee with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next; and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

NAUTICAL ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 193.)

Amendments reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

BRITISH MUSEUM (PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.—(No. 173.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 3rd August 1894.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

WEST RIDING RIVERS CONSERVANCY BILL (*by Order*).

Lords Amendments considered.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, that certain alterations had been made in this Bill in another place, which he did not approve, but he did not think it would be consistent with his duty to object to them, as the promoters had accepted them, and he should therefore assent to the Lords Amendments.

Lords Amendments agreed to.

QUESTIONS.

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL MAGISTRATES.

Mr. RANKIN (Herefordshire, Leominster): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, if a Chairman of a District Council qualified as a Magistrate, he would be required to pay the usual fees; and, if so, whether he would be required to pay such fees over again if he, on a second occasion, was elected as Chairman of a District Council and qualified as a Magistrate?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): In a Circular sent out from the Home Office on the 14th of last month, I have advised the Standing Joint Committees that the fee payable on qualifying by an *ex officio* Justice should not exceed 5s. This fee would, I apprehend, be payable as often as the Magistrate qualified; it could not, if my advice as to its amount is followed, constitute a serious burden.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any decision has been arrived at as to the amount of the military contribution to be paid annually by the Straits Settlements; and if he will state the amount?

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) also had the following question on the Paper: To ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is yet in a position to communicate to the House the decision arrived at by the Government on the amount to be paid by the Straits Settlements as its contribution to the military expenditure?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) I have good reason to hope, and believe, that the decision will not now be long delayed.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON: In thanking the hon. Gentleman for his invariable courtesy, I beg to give him notice I will ask the question again this day week.

REGISTRATION OF TITLES IN IRELAND.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in prospect of a number of freehold claims for the franchise being made at the coming Revision Sessions in Ireland, he will direct that, where necessary, in consequence of the delay in registering titles under The Local Registration of Title Act, 1891, copies of the vesting orders, or conveyances, as the case may be, shall be forwarded to the Clerk of the Crown and Peace, for production before the Revising Barrister?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am informed that copies of vesting orders or conveyances are not legal evidence, which the Revising Barristers are bound to accept. With respect to purchase under the Land Acts, transfers of freeholds executed since the 5th of August, 1891, do not confer a title to the freehold franchise until the registration of the title has been completed (see Sec. 25, Sub-sec. 1 of The Local Registration of Title Act, 1891). In such cases it would be useless to obtain the documents before the completion of the registration.

MR. CARSON (Dublin University): Is it not the fact that there is great delay in the registration, and that great inconvenience is thereby caused?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am sorry to say that there is great delay, and I am advised by the officer in charge of the department that some further legislation will be necessary if the department is to be made as effective as hon. Members on both sides of the House would desire it to be.

MR. ROSS (Londonderry): Would it not be possible by putting on an extra staff to get up the arrears of the work?

MR. J. MORLEY: I can only say that I have the matter under my careful consideration.

EVICTIONS IN COUNTY LIMERICK.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Frederick Hobson, the Sub-Sheriff of County Limerick, while executing an ejectment decree against John Bridgeman, near Limerick, on the 25th of July, was offered severe resistance, Mr. O'Brien, the agent, being badly hurt, and that he had to abandon the execution in consequence of the violence displayed; whether he is also aware that the Sheriff sent one of his men to the adjoining police barracks at Clarina, who informed the police that a severe assault had taken place, and that their attendance was requested by the Sheriff; whether the police complied with the Sheriff's request; whether the attention of the Law Officers have been drawn to the action of John Bridgeman in resisting the Sheriff in the execution of his duty; and whether the Government propose to take any action in the matter?

MR. J. MORLEY: I replied very fully to a question put to me in reference to this matter on last Tuesday by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Mid Armagh. I have since directed that proceedings should be instituted.

INMATES OF IRISH WORKHOUSES.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what was the average number of inmates in the workhouses of Ireland for the year ending 8th March, 1894, and the total number of deaths in these institutions within the same period?

MR. J. MORLEY: It is not possible to give the particulars required for the year ended Thursday, March 8 last, as the official Returns are only made up at the end of each week. During the year ended Saturday, March 10 last, the estimated average daily number of indoor paupers was 40,929. The total number of cases relieved in the Irish workhouses during the year ended March 10, 1894, was 328,313, and the actual number of deaths during the year was 9,807. It must be borne in mind that the number of cases relieved does not represent the actual number of individuals admitted, as the same persons may be re-admitted many times in the course of the year.

OUTDOOR OFFICERS OF CUSTOMS.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is intended to change the limits of age for candidates for the position of outdoor officers of Customs from 19-25 to 18-21; and, if so, when it is proposed that the change shall come into operation; what notice, if any, was given to intending competitors; whether, at the last June examinations of 142 candidates who attained the standard of proficiency required by the Civil Service Commissioners, only 50 were appointed; and will the remaining 92 qualified candidates who have not received appointments be allowed to compete as heretofore until they have attained the age of 25 ?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): It has been decided to change the limits of age as stated in the question, and the Treasury and the Civil Service Commissioners have carefully considered the amount of notice which should be given before the change is introduced. As the result, it has been settled that two more examinations shall be held under the old conditions as to age—a concession which the Treasury considers fair and reasonable.

COMPULSORY RE-VACCINATION OF LONDON CONSTABLES.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the statement that a body of the Metropolitan Police has been or is about to be re-vaccinated; by whose orders is this directed; are the men's feelings consulted in the matter, and is any one of them entitled to decline; and is there any statutory power to force the proceeding on any unwilling men ?

MR. ASQUITH: I understand that in cases in which it was deemed necessary, the police at Portland Town Police Station and the police of that subdivision, which is in the centre of the locality where small-pox has been so prevalent lately, were re-vaccinated, with the Commissioner's approval, on the recommendation of the chief surgeon to the Force. I am informed that none of the men made any objection. It is one of the qualifications for acceptance by every candidate that he shall be re-vaccinated on appointment as constable.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): So ought Members of Parliament.

AGE QUALIFICATION FOR EXCISE APPOINTMENTS.

MR. HOPWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the limit of age for appointments in the Excise has recently without warning been altered from 22 years to 21 years; whether he is aware that a number of candidates for the service, some of whom have already passed the preliminary examination by the Civil Service Commissioners, will be excluded by the change of age; and whether the Department will postpone the coming into force of the new Regulation for a period, so that injustice may not be caused to those who have been preparing for candidature ?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: There has been no recent change in the limits of age for the Excise entrance examination. It may be that my hon. Friend refers to a change in the limits of age for candidates for the outdoor service of the Customs, as to which I have just answered a question put by the hon. Member for North Cork.

PEMBROKE TOWNSHIP.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board some time since received a communication from the ratepayers of the Pembroke township, and more recently a correspondence from two Town Commissioners with regard to certain proceeding of the Township Board, and whether any action was, or will be, taken thereon; and whether he is aware that the burgess list is regulated by the Town Clerk upon a £10 rating qualification without any Revising Barrister or public revision; and that the agent of the Earl of Pembroke need not be elected by the ratepayers, as the Act provides that the agent for the time being shall be a Commissioner ?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board inform me that they are unable to identify the correspondence to which the hon. Gentleman refers in the first paragraph of the question. If he will state to what precise matter it relates further inquiry will be made. With regard to the second paragraph, the list of persons entitled to vote at the annual election of the Pembroke Town Commissioners is made out by the clerk in the manner prescribed in the 27th section of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1871. The rating qualification is £10. The agent for the time being of the Earl of Pembroke's estate within the township is *ex officio* a Commissioner under Section 10 of the Pembroke Township Act, 1863.

DUBLIN TELEGRAPHISTS.

Mr. SWEETMAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether some Dublin telegraphists have recently been asked to accept less than the usual allowance for special duty in connection with important events; what rate is allowed under Rule 17 of Instructions to head postmasters for such duty; what was the lowest sum per diem that Dublin telegraphists have been asked to accept; and whether he will take steps to see that the rule on the subject is strictly adhered to?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): I am not aware in Dublin that there has been a departure from the rule. Probably what the hon. Member has in view is the following rate:—"Not exceeding 6d. an hour or 12s. a day." But in the same rule there is prescribed a rate—"Not exceeding 5s. a day." Both rates, it will be observed, are maximum. The first rate applies to officers sent to race and other meetings where their stay is short, and the cost of lodging is high; the second to those who are temporarily detached from one post office to another, and there are no special circumstances tending to raise the price of lodgings.

Mr. SWEETMAN: But is it not a fact that some of the Dublin telegraphists have been asked to accept a rate of 3s. a day for duty on coast stations in connection with the Naval Manœuvres? Has not 12s. hitherto been allowed in nearly all these cases, and have not the men explained that they cannot live on such an allowance in crowded seaport towns?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I cannot answer that question; but if the hon. Member will forward me particulars I will inquire into the matter.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE COLERAINE UNION.

Mr. M'GILLIGAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he could state how many labourers' cottages have been erected in the Coleraine Union since the passing of the Act; (2) whether he is aware that a large number of applications from Knockintern and other divisions of the Union have been sent to the Coleraine Board of Guardians and rejected on the ground of alleged informalities, such as several signatures being in the same handwriting, applicants working for various employers, and similar reasons; (3) whether the Local Government Board have had to interfere and direct the Coleraine Board to consider these applications on the ground that the informalities were immaterial; and (4) will the Local Government Board direct the Coleraine Board to amend applications, when necessary, in the future, and facilitate the operation of the Act?

Mr. J. MORLEY: (1.) No cottages have been built under the Labourers' Acts in this Union. (2.) I believe the facts to be as stated in the second paragraph. (3.) It having been represented to the Local Government Board that the signatures to one of the representations were genuine, the Board have asked the Guardians to reconsider the matter again after notice. The Guardians have appointed a Committee to visit the localities where it is alleged houses are required, and have called on the Medical Officer of Health for a Report as to the condition of the houses stated to be unfit for habitation. They will hold a special meeting on the 25th instant to reconsider the whole matter. (4.) A Board of Guardians have no power to alter or amend representations made to them under the Labourers' Acts.

ILLEGAL TRAWLING OFF THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state why proceedings have not been taken against the master or owner of the steam trawler *Triton*, M 93, for trawling withing the three-mile limit off Portnaguran, Island of Lewis, on 31st May last; why, seeing that the Crown Counsel and the Fishery Board for Scotland were aware that the *Triton* was recently at Milford Haven, no action was then taken; and why the Crown Counsel has advised no further proceedings unless the *Triton* returns to Scotch waters?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.): I have ascertained that the statements of the fishermen who made the complaint against the *Triton* were not of themselves sufficient to support a charge of trawling within the three-mile limit, and further that no damage was done by the *Triton* to the complainers' nets. It was, therefore, resolved to obtain, if possible, statements from persons on board the *Triton* (other than those who could be charged), but even where there is an existing charge and warrant — which there is not in this case—much difficulty has been found in obtaining evidence in England in such cases, and neither the Procurator Fiscal, nor any agent appointed by him, could assert a right to go on board the *Triton* in England for this purpose. In these circumstances, it was not considered necessary to send the Fiscal from Stornoway to Milford Haven, or to instruct anyone on the spot to endeavour to get access to persons on board the *Triton* there. If, however, the *Triton* returns to Scotch waters, an opportunity may be found of obtaining the desired information.

INSPECTORS OF METALLIFEROUS MINES.

SIR S. NORTHCOTE (Exeter): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the recent appointment of an Assistant Inspector of Metalliferous Mines in the Cumberland district, whether the blue paper containing a statement of the qualifications necessary for an Inspectorship of Mines was issued to many or all candidates for the office; whether one of the candidates for this office was informed by a letter from the Home Office, dated 10th April, 1894, that as he appeared to be above the maximum limit of age for the appointment—namely, 35 years, the Home Secretary regretted that he was not able to take the application into consideration with those of the numerous other candidates; and if there be no limit of age required for the office, how it came about that the said Circular was sent and the letter of the 10th of April was written?

MR. ASQUITH: When the three additional appointments of Assistant Inspector of Metalliferous Mines were created at the beginning of this year, the original intention was to appoint the Assistant Inspectors under both the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, and the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act, 1872. The conditions prescribed in the Paper to which the hon. Member refers would therefore have applied, and candidates who stated their age to be under 35 were furnished with copies of this Paper, while those who were above that age (including two who were written to on the 10th of April) were answered to the effect stated in the second paragraph of the question. I afterwards came to the conclusion that it was undesirable to carry out this intention, as it would have limited the candidature to persons of coal mining experience, which for the present purpose is not required, one of the three Assistant Inspectors being needed to inspect metalliferous mines in Cumberland, and the others to inspect slate mines and quarries in North Wales, while some of the most eligible candidates, including two of those selected, are over 35. The three officers have therefore been appointed under the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Act, 1872, and for the appointment of Inspector under this Act, as I have already stated, no limit of age or other qualification has been prescribed.

MR. HOZIER (Lanark, S.): Is it intended that these Assistant Inspectors shall inspect quarries?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, Sir, certainly, as far as North Wales is concerned.

MR. HOZIER: And so far as Scotland is concerned?

MR. ASQUITH: Probably, but I cannot say definitely.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): Is any age limit prescribed in the Act of 1887?

MR. ASQUITH: There is no limit prescribed by the Act. It is fixed by the Regulations of the Secretary of State.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked whether the candidates who were over age were notified that they were ineligible?

MR. ASQUITH: There were only two such gentlemen, and their claims were carefully considered. If they had been very eligible, I should have appointed them in spite of their being above the age.

*MR. TOMLINSON: But had they an opportunity of having their qualifications reconsidered after the withdrawal of the limit of age?

Mr. ASQUITH: They had sent in their testimonials. I have all the facts before me.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked whether the gentlemen appointed had been examined by the Civil Service Commissioners, with regard to their health, and whether they were entitled to a pension?

Mr. ASQUITH: Perhaps the hon. Member will give me notice as to the examination in respect of health. They are not entitled to a pension on the terms prescribed in the 4th section of the Superannuation Act.

Mr. BARTLEY: Is it not the fact that no one now is allowed to enter the Public Service without passing an examination as to health?

Mr. ASQUITH: I cannot say how far that applies to the excepted appointments under the 4th section of the Act, but I will inquire.

CRUELTY TO VAN HORSES IN LONDON.

Captain DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that gross cruelty is frequently inflicted upon cart horses in London by compelling them to draw loads beyond their strength over some of the bridges across the Thames; and that serious accidents often result from this practice, especially in slippery weather; and if he will cause instructions to be given to the constables stationed near these bridges to direct their attention to such cases, and to summon all persons guilty of this cruelty?

Mr. ASQUITH: The gradients to many of the bridges are steep, and, at times, no doubt slippery, but I am informed that the accidents reported are not more frequent there than in any other thoroughfare. The police are instructed to take proceedings in any case in which the law against cruelty is infringed, and I believe that they are vigilant in performing their duty in that respect.

Captain DONELAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in the event of persons being summoned for this offence, take steps to ensure that the punishment falls on the proper shoulders—those of the owners and not of the carmen.

Mr. ASQUITH: That depends on the Magistrate.

Mr. H. L. W. LAWSON (Gloucester, Cirencester): Are the police instructed to give all assistance to officers of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals?

Mr. ASQUITH: I think so; but I will inquire if there are any special instructions.

POST OFFICE ANNUAL REPORT.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he has completed the preparation of his Annual Report; and if he can state when it will be laid upon the Table?

***Mr. A. MORLEY**: I have forwarded the report to the Treasury, and that Board will no doubt take an early opportunity of presenting it.

POSTAL ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will endeavour to cause provision to be made whereby insurers in the Post Office Life Insurance Department may take out policies with shorter payments in advance than the annual premiums in advance now required; whether he will endeavour to cause provision to be made, by legislation or otherwise, to enable the funds of the Post Office Insurance Department to be invested in securities in which trustees are by law allowed to invest; whether he will arrange that the quinquennial valuations required by Section 3 of the Act 27 & 28 Vic., c. 46, to be prepared by the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt shall be laid before Parliament; and whether he will endeavour to cause arrangements to be made whereby any profits arising from the Post Office Insurance Department may be divided amongst insurants, as appears to have been intended by Subsection 9 of Section 5 of the Act, 45 Vic., c. 51? At the same time, I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will cause a Return to be made of the expenditure of the Post Office Insurance Vote, especially of the Salaries and Allowances (if any) paid to officers in the

Public Service in receipt of other Salaries or Allowances; and whether he will cause the annual Returns made of Post Office Insurance business to distinguish between the two different classes of insurance—namely, from £5 to £25, and from exceeding £25 to £100? Further, I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will try the experiment of opening offices in the evening in some of the large towns at which persons may obtain from officers thoroughly acquainted with the business special information about taking out insurances and annuities, and aid in filling up the necessary forms?

MR. A. MORLEY: I am hardly in a position to answer Question 1, which concerns important matters coming within the province of the Treasury and of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt. As regards the second question, the details of the expenditure for Post Office Insurance are shewn on Page 87 of the Post Office Estimates. No specific salary or allowance is paid to any officer of the Department for insurance work, but commissions are paid to Sub-Postmasters and others for securing contracts according to authorised rates varying from 1s. to 4s. per contract. The number of contracts issued yearly for the last 10 years in respect of the two classes of insurance mentioned is given in a table, a copy of which I shall be glad to send to the hon. Member. In answer to the last question, I have to say that at all large towns Post Offices are open up to 8 and in some cases so late as 11 in the evening, and all necessary information respecting Post Office insurance and annuities can be obtained and aid given in filling up the necessary forms.

RESERVE MEN IN THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has come to any decision as to stoppage of pay of Reserve men employed in the General Post Office, the deduction amounting to £9 per annum, and the man accepting the liability of serving in the Reserve, but receiving no pay for doing so?

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): I am in communication with the Post Office on the subject, but no decision has yet been arrived at.

GUNPOWDER IN THE NYASSA-TANGANYIKA DISTRICT.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the attention of the Foreign Office has been called to the circumstantial allegations of a grave character which appeared in *The Times*, of 30th July, relating to five distinct occasions upon which it is alleged that the German steamer *Hermann von Wissman* has recently conveyed cargoes of powder across Lake Nyassa into the immediate vicinity of British territory; whether the said gunpowder was so moved under the authorisation of the German administration as required by Article 9 of the Brussels Act; and whether Her Majesty's Government will call the attention of the German Government to the disastrous consequences which are likely to follow upon a continued importation of gunpowder into the regions infected by the Slave Trade?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): Information received from the Acting Commissioner confirms the fact that powder has been thus introduced into the British Protectorate, but the detailed statements referred to have not been officially corroborated. Her Majesty's Government have no knowledge as to the conditions under which powder has been moved within German territory. It is, however, necessary that measures should be taken in the Nyassa-Tanganyika district to prevent its importation and control its movement within British territory. A post has accordingly now been placed on the Songwe River which will, it is expected, facilitate the control. Meanwhile the German Governor, who has shown an earnest desire to co-operate in the repression of the Slave Trade, has been informed by the Acting Commissioner of the facts which have come to his knowledge as to the introduction into the Protectorate of powder landed from the steamer in German territory.

KILLURAN SCHOOLHOUSE.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will inquire into the application for the erection of a schoolhouse in the townland of Killuran, County Clare, made by the Rev. Denis Cleary, P.P., upon behalf of the inhabitants of the district; and whether the National Education Board will see that this application is granted?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The application referred to has been received. The Commissioners of National Education have already ordered a grant in aid of building the proposed new schoolhouse, subject to satisfactory title to the site.

THE CELFYNYDD COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the statement made in the verdict of the Coroner's Jury on the Celfynydd Colliery explosion, that they considered the present examinations by the workmen's representatives are worthless; and whether, under the 38th General Rule of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, the workmen employed in a mine can appoint two workmen from another mine, or a check weigher, to make an inspection on their behalf; and, if not, whether he will make provision in the Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill, now before the House, enabling a check weigher to enter the mine at any time for purposes of inspection or otherwise, provided he does not interfere with the working of the mine?

Mr. ASQUITH: My attention has been called to the verdict of the Coroner's Jury on the Celfynydd Colliery explosion. By the 38th Rule of The Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1887, the persons employed in a mine may appoint

> "two of their number, or any two persons, not being mining engineers, who are practical working miners,"

to make an inspection on their behalf. This would certainly enable them to appoint two miners from another mine.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last part of my question?

Mr. ASQUITH: I do not see any necessity for legislation in this direction. As I have already stated, the check weigher is a practical working miner, and, as the men have power to appoint two on their own behalf, I do not think the law needs altering.

COLDBATH FIELDS MONEY ORDER OFFICE.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Postmaster General what is the distance of the Money Order Office, in what was formerly Clerkenwell Prison, from the General Post Office; whether the Money Order Office is, by its situation, cut off from the rest of the Department; whether it is a matter of constant occurrence for persons, mostly poor people, to be sent from local post offices to the General Post Office, thence to Clerkenwell, and thence back again to the General Post Office over some trifling irregularity in a money order; and whether, on the ground of public inconvenience, as well as of the health of the officials, he will consent to the removal of the Money Order Office from its present quarters?

Mr. A. MORLEY: The distance of the Money Order Office from the General Post Office is about a mile. The inquiry offices in the two buildings are connected by telephone, and a free omnibus runs seven times a day in each direction for the convenience of applicants whom it may be found necessary to refer personally from one office to the other. I regret that it is quite impossible to move the Money Order Office from its present quarters; but I am endeavouring to make arrangements to avoid, as far as possible, the inconveniences to which the hon. Member has called my attention.

Mr. DARLING asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had not received a Report as to the sanitary condition of this Money Order Office, stating that it was wholly unfit for the habitation of the people employed in it; and whether he would not, in view of these facts, have the office removed?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I have received no such Report.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the estimated increase in the deficit on the Indian Budget for the year owing to the further fall in the rupee that has taken place since the Indian Financial Statement was made?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The rate of exchange with India was estimated at the beginning of the financial year—namely, April 1 last, at 1s. 2d. Since that time only four months have elapsed, and there are not yet sufficient data for the formation of a new estimate.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL AT ALDERSHOT.

Mr. PIERPOINT (Warrington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to a Report presented to the Surrey County Council, on 31st July, by the medical officer of the county, in which it is stated that the spot where the sewage of Aldershot Camp is supposed to be disposed of is, instead of being a sewage farm, a sewage marsh, where pools of stagnant putrid sewage give rise to poisonous exhalations, which, if the cholera infection were introduced, would soon prove to be of a most deadly character; and whether, if the statement is founded on fact, he will take the necessary measures to get rid of the nuisance?

*Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Report referred to has been received by the War Office. The question of removing the sewage farm is under consideration, and steps have been taken to co-operate with the Local Board of Health of Aldershot town in the disposal of sewage at a place sufficiently remote from habitations.

TRADE DISPUTE AT GORSEINON.

Mr. RANDELL (Glamorgan, Gower): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, arising out of a tinplate trade dispute, the workpeople interested held a demonstration at Gorseinon, near Swansea, on the 26th of June last, and, though orderly, were charged and batoned by a small body of police; that many persons who took no part in the proceedings were chased across the common and severely wounded by the police; that in the early morning of the following day some 18 or 20 tinplate workers were resting in a timber yard by permission of the proprietor, and whilst many of them were asleep, were attacked and bludgeoned over and through a barbed wire fencing which encloses the premises, and seriously injured by the police; can he state at whose instance, and by what authority, this attack was made; and whether a full inquiry, at which the injured persons may be represented and heard, will be made into the conduct of the police on the occasions referred to?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have no direct authority over this police force, but I think I may make a suggestion to the Joint Standing Committee of the county that they might very well inquire into this matter.

Major JONES (Carmarthen, &c.): Is it not a fact that while the men were marching peaceably along and singing, the proprietor of the works used language which gave offence, and, in fact, led to the disturbance which took place?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have none of the facts before me, and cannot answer without notice.

WORKING HOURS IN ADMIRALTY ESTABLISHMENTS.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS; I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether, in reckoning $50\frac{1}{3}$ hours as the average weekly time formerly occupied by workmen in the Admiralty establishments, the allowances of time hitherto customary, but now discontinued, have been taken into account, and what the weekly average of those allowances amounted to; what is the estimated time that engineers, stokers, furnacemen, &c., will be required to work, in addition to the maximum hours of $10\frac{1}{2}$ per day computed from the commencement to leaving off work, under the new arrangement; and will any other classes of workmen be required to do overtime beyond the $10\frac{1}{2}$ maximum hours in cases of emergency?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. Robertson, Dundee): The average number of working hours per week was formerly $50\frac{1}{3}$, exclusive of 38 minutes per week time allowances, now discontinued. No exact estimate can be given of the extra time that engine-keepers, stokers, and furnacemen will be required to work in addition to the ordinary hours of the yard, but it may be taken approximately at two hours a day. In case of emergency, but in that case only, other classes of workmen may be required to work overtime.

POSTAL FACILITIES IN SOUTH WALES.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether it is still the case that in the principal towns in South Wales situated on the main line of the Great Western Railway letters have to be posted at an earlier hour than in English towns double the distance from London in order to catch the first morning delivery; and, if so, whether there is any immediate prospect of an improvement being made in the postal facilities in that district?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I am in correspondence with the Great Western Railway on the subject; and although the negotiations are not finally concluded, I hope very shortly to be in a position to announce that I have succeeded in giving the increased facilities which are desired.

ELECTRICAL COMMUNICATION WITH LIGHTSHIPS.

Major JONES: On behalf of the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Committee appointed to consider the best means for establishing electrical communication between lightships and the mainland is still sitting; whether the trials of swivels have until now been confined to one novelty; and whether it is intended to submit the other swivels submitted to the Committee to similar trials, for the purpose of securing for the Government the invention best intended to meet the requirements of the Board of Trade?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The Committee to which the hon. Member would appear to refer reported and closed its sittings in 1889. The whole subject is now being dealt with by the Royal Commission on Electrical Communication with Lighthouses and Lightvessels. I understand that a number of inventions, including various modes of applying swivels, for establishing electrical communication between light-ships and the mainland, have been considered by the Royal Commission, and I would refer the hon. Member to the paragraph at the top of page 8 of their Second Report, dated March last, in which the Commissioners state that, in their opinion, none of the inventions which they have considered are preferable to the system known as the *Sunk* system, which has now been applied to the Goodwin and Kentish Knock Light Vessels. I have no doubt that the Royal Commission will consider, and, if necessary, test, any inventions brought before them which appear to them to be superior to the *Sunk* system.

Major JONES: Is it not a fact that only two inventions have been submitted, and that only one has been tested?

Mr. BRYCE: My information is that a considerable number have been examined.

GARVE AND ULLAPOOL RAILWAY COMPANY.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether in the preparation of the Estimates for next year provision will be made for a guarantee to enable the Garve and Ullapool Railway Company to proceed with the line from Garve to Ullapool?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I am afraid I cannot give my hon. Friend the undertaking he desires.

JOINT-RATED OCCUPIERS IN IRELAND.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, despite the judgments of the Irish Court of Appeal last year in certain joint-tenancy cases, the Clerks of Union in North Tyrone (especially in Castlederg Union) have returned a number of joint-rated occupiers on the Voters' List for 1895 without objection where there is no joint tenancy; and what steps do the Local Government Board take to make Poor Law officials acquainted with Registration Law, or to see that it is carried out?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The clerk of the Castlederg Union has informed the Local Government Board that the persons whom he had returned as joint-rated occupiers without objection were persons whose names he found on the Revised

Valuation Roll for 1895, and that he had been informed by the rate collectors that they had seen joint-tenancy receipts of the persons in question. He had no information before him to lead him to object and was unaware of the effect of the decision of the Court of Appeal. I am informed that it does not devolve upon the Local Government Board to make clerks of Unions acquainted with the Registration Law, or to see that it is carried out. The Board have no jurisdiction over Boards of Guardians and clerks of Unions in their capacity as "Overseers" under the Franchise Acts.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a large number of persons ought to be struck off the list?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am not aware of that.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY AND GUN LICENCES.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Royal Irish Constabulary are allowed by the Rules of the Force to use a gun for pleasure on taking out an Excise licence; if not, what punishment is a superior liable to for connivance at this breach of the Regulations?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Regulations do not absolutely prohibit shooting for pleasure generally in the Royal Irish Constabulary, but it is only allowed in moderation in the case of the officers, and the men are prohibited from so doing in the districts where serving. The punishment for any breach of the Regulations would depend upon the circumstances of the case, and if the particulars are given the matter will be inquired into.

SOUTH MEATH VOTERS' LISTS.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he inquire if, at the last Trim Revision Sessions, the names of the following 10 persons were objected to on the South Meath Voters' List by Thomas Rogers, and the objections allowed, notwithstanding which they appear on the Voters' List for 1894—namely, 127, Cox, John, Haggard Street, Trim; 269, Farrell, Francis, Churchtown; 280, Finnegan, John, Church Street, Trim; 425, Kane, Peter, Trim; 540, Melady, Michael, Watergate Street, Trim; 541, Melia, John, junior, Scarlet Street, Trim; 562, Mooney, James, Seaton Lane, Trim; 637, McKean, Thomas, Market Street, Trim; 669, Nulty, Patrick, Trim; 796, Smyth, John, Townpark South; 672, O'Dare, John, Watergate Street, Trim; and do these names all belong to one political Party?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Clerk of the Crown and Peace informs me that only five of the 10 names mentioned in the question were objected to at the last Revision Sessions; that of these five objections only one was signed by Thomas Rogers; and that none of the five objections were allowed. All the names mentioned in question were allowed to remain on the lists by the Revising Barrister and appear on the Register for the present year. I have no information as to the politics of the persons named.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the information supplied to me entirely differs from that of the right hon. Gentleman, may I ask if he referred the matter to the Revising Barrister?

MR. J. MORLEY: If my hon. Friend thinks the information incorrect I will make further inquiry.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But was the Revising Barrister referred to?

MR. J. MORLEY: I really cannot say.

PROTESTANTS IN IRISH GOVERNMENT EMPLOY.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the Constabulary Office in Dublin Castle, the Inspector General, three Assistant Inspectors General, the County Inspector in the Crime Department, 17 of the 18 Civil Service clerks, the resident Head Constable, seven sergeants, who are in receipt of 2s. 6d. per diem extra pay, and the constable who sleeps in the office at night, are Protestants; will he state what is the reason why so many of these officials belong to a creed which is that of a small minority of the population; are the majority of the sergeants and constable messengers enjoying extra pay for service in the Castle also Protestants; and can any explanation be given?

MR. J. MORLEY: There is only one Assistant Inspector General at headquarters in the Castle, and he, I am informed, is a Protestant. The Deputy

Inspector General, who is not referred to in the question, is a Roman Catholic. Of the clerical staff six are Roman Catholics and 12 Protestants, and, as regards the members of the Force employed in the office in receipt of extra pay, seven are Catholics and eight Protestants. Of the entire establishment at the Constabulary Office, including messengers and men of the Force, 15 are Roman Catholics and 26 Protestants. The members of the Force employed in the office are, as I have stated, of nearly equal proportions, a fact which the Inspector General assures me was unknown to him until the information required by the question was placed before him. The religious element is not one which enters into these appointments.

Mr. DARLING (Deptford): May I ask how these details as to the private religious opinions of the officers were obtained? Is there not an objection on the part of many of them to state to what religion they belong?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Everybody in Ireland has to state his religion in the Census Return.

Mr. DARLING: I did not put this question to the hon. Member, but to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary.

Mr. J. MORLEY: The information was obtained in the way in which we obtain most of our information—namely, from those who are most likely to give us good and accurate information.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): Was the information obtained by personal inquiries addressed to the individuals concerned?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I should say that probably that was not necessary, but I cannot give the hon. Member an answer on the point.

THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF CARDIGANSHIRE.

Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the fact that Robert Lewis, the bailiff of the Newcastle-Emlyn County Court, has publicly accused the Chief Constable of Cardiganshire of having made false statements with regard to the tithe disturbances last March in his recent Report to the Standing Joint Committee; whether he is aware that at the last meeting of the Standing Joint Committee Mr. Willis Bund, Chairman of Quarter Sessions, moved that a sub-committee be appointed to inquire into these allegations, but the majority (consisting mainly of County Council members) rejected this, after refusing to hear Mr. Lewis's evidence; and whether, in view of the desirability of the truth as to the Chief Constable's action being elicited, he will cause an inquiry to be held by the Inspector of Constabulary, or by some other means?

Mr. ASQUITH: My attention has been drawn to the charges brought against the Chief Constable of Cardiganshire by Mr. Lewis. I am not myself of opinion that the discrepancies between Mr. Lewis's account of what happened on the occasions in question and the account given in the Chief Constable's Report to the Standing Joint Committee are of sufficient importance to justify a formal inquiry, or are of such a character that there is any probability of their being cleared up by any inquiry that I could set on foot. I have not myself power to institute an inquiry on oath or to compel the attendance of witnesses or to require them to answer questions put to them. Mr. Willis Bund did move that a sub-committee of the Standing Joint Committee should inquire into the alleged inaccuracies in the Chief Constable's Report, but the Committee did not consider this necessary. Before coming to this decision they had Mr. Lewis's letter under consideration, but I do not understand that they had any opportunity of hearing him orally.

*Mr. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: But is it not a fact that the Chief Inspector of Constabulary has to certify the Force to be efficient before the Government allowance can be paid; and does the right hon. Gentleman consider it can be so certified properly when the Chief Constable has been publicly accused by an officer of the law of making a false statement to the Standing Joint Committee; and when the Committee has refused to investigate the charge?

Mr. ASQUITH said, the discrepancies in the information given by Mr. Lewis and the Chief Constable were very small, and had no relation whatsoever to the duty of the Inspector of Constabulary in certifying as to the efficiency of the Force.

LOUGH FOYLE.

Mr. ROSS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, after the conclusion of the Naval Manœuvres, it will be possible for some of the ships engaged to visit Lough Foyle?

Mr. MAINS (Donegal, N.): Is it not 10 years since the squadron last visited this lough? Is it not the fact that the Royal Navy is largely recruited from this district?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I am informed that the visit which the hon. Member suggests will not be possible.

CRICKET IN THE NEW FOREST.

Captain SINCLAIR (Dumbartonshire): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that from time immemorial the inhabitants of the locality have played cricket and other games upon Swan Green, in the New Forest; that, notwithstanding this, the deputy surveyor has given formal notice to the Emery Down Cricket Club not to play cricket upon the Green until they have received the permission of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests to do so; and whether the action of the deputy surveyor has been sanctioned by him; and, if not, whether he will give orders that the national game shall be encouraged rather than hindered in the New Forest?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: It is believed to be the case that boys have been accustomed to play games on Swan Green, in the New Forest, and this usage has not been interrupted by the Commissioners of Woods. A new club has just been started which, without permission asked or obtained from the Crown, has appropriated a particular portion of Swan Green for a cricket pitch and has rolled it. The Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest, in the discharge of his duty, gave notice to this Cricket Club not to make any use of the ground without the authority of the Crown. The terms on which such authority will be given have since been communicated to the Cricket Club. There is no intention on the part of the Commissioners of Woods to stop the inhabitants of Emery Down from enjoying themselves over Swan Green as they have been accustomed to do. Cricket Clubs cannot, however, be allowed to appropriate, level, and roll particular portions of the New Forest without permission from the Commissioner of Woods, who is responsible for the management of the Forest.

HIGHLAND LIGHT INFANTRY MILITIA.

Mr. HARRY SMITH (Falkirk, &c.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the trade depression in Lanarkshire, and the difficulty of finding employment there in consequence of the present strike, he can extend the period for training of the 3rd and 4th Battalions of Highland Light Infantry Militia now stationed at Lanark?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Money is voted only for the ordinary training of Militia for the normal period of four weeks, and there are no funds to provide for any additional training of a particular battalion owing to some local circumstances unconnected with its military efficiency. I am afraid, therefore, that the suggestion of my hon. Friend cannot be adopted.

ARMY RESERVE CORPS TRANSPORT.

Mr. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended that in actual service in war the Army Reserve Corps transport, placed at the disposal of the Army Medical Department, will be strictly assigned to that department for exclusively medical and surgical purposes; and whether during the Boer War the field medical transport was employed for military (*i.e.* combatant) as well as medical purposes, and on this account did not receive the protection of the Red Cross?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On active service a section of the Army Service Corps would be detached solely for transport duties with the Army Medical Department, subject to removal therefrom only under the authority of the General Officer commanding. I have made inquiries as to the second part of the question, and, as far as can be ascertained, the Field Medical Transport was not employed for combatant purposes during the Boer War.

WEST LONDON SCHOOL DISTRICT.

Mr. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, considering that he has undertaken to institute an inquiry, either by a Royal Commission or by a Select Committee of this House, into the present system of aggregating large numbers of children into district schools, he will suspend the instructions given to the managers of the West London school district to build another school?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): The school has been overcrowded, and it is for this reason that the Local Government Board have urged that additional accommodation should be provided. The managers proposed to extend the present main school buildings for this purpose; but this the Board declined to assent to, and they have stated that any additional accommodation should be obtained by the erection of a separate school. This separate school may be on the cottage home principle. The Board see no reason to alter the opinion which they have expressed in this matter.

THE OPIUM COMMISSION.

Mr. TALBOT: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Kirkdale Division of Liverpool, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Report of the Royal Commission on the use of opium in India is likely to be laid before Parliament in the course of the present Session; and, if not, can he state when the Report is likely to be presented?

***Mr. H. H. FOWLER**: I am informed that the Report cannot be presented before November.

LADY INSPECTORS OF PAUPER DISTRICT SCHOOLS.

Mr. TALBOT: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will consider the desirability of appointing a lady Inspector to visit the pauper district schools, in which a great number of girls and children of tender age are being educated, in order to ensure that their best interests may be attended to?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I fully appreciate the advantages which may be obtained from the services of ladies in connection with Poor Law schools. I am glad to say that with one exception all the district schools in London have one or more ladies acting as managers. In the case of four out of the six school districts the Local Government Board have exercised their power of nominating by appointing ladies as managers. In the case also of 18 of the Metropolitan Unions lady Guardians have been elected, and the Local Government Board have encouraged the appointment of ladies' committees. I cannot, however, give any undertaking as to the appointment of a lady Inspector.

DOMINICA.

Mr. O'DRISCOLL (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state when he expects to be able to lay upon the Table of the House the Report of Sir Robert Hamilton concerning the condition of Dominica?

Mr. S. BUXTON: I stated yesterday that I could not actually state when I should be in a position to lay the Papers; but I fully hope to do so before the Recess.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. HOZIER: May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can now state when the Report stage of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill will be taken?

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I should like to be informed what will be the second Order of the Day on Monday next, so far as can at present be foreseen.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll): And I will ask whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer can now give an answer to the question which I asked the right hon. Gentleman yesterday—namely, whether the Government will be able to take the Report stage of the Scotch Local Government Bill between the two stages of the Equalisation of Rates Bill next week?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I will first answer the question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's. The first Order on Monday will be the Report of the Evicted Tenants Bill, and this will be followed by the Committee stage of the Equalisation of Rates Bill, if not concluded to-night. There will then be, on Tuesday, the Third Reading of the Evicted Tenants Bill. After we have finished the Committee of the Equalisation of Rates Bill we propose to go on, before the Report stage of that Bill is taken—as it may be thought necessary to leave a day between the two stages, in case there should be Amendments—to the Report of the Local Government (Scotland) Bill. I will, however, say definitely, for the convenience of Scotch Members, that the latter Bill shall not be taken before Wednesday.

Mr. TOMLINSON: Is it to be understood that the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill also will not be taken before Wednesday?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I have not said that.

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman take the Second Reading of the Crofters Act Amendment Bill on Tuesday?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I will consider about that, because we may, perhaps, have an opportunity of taking some other Bills besides the Third Reading of the Evicted Tenants Bill, if the Irish Bill does not occupy the whole day.

Sir A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Do the Government intend that the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill shall be taken in Committee of the Whole House or in Grand Committee?

Mr. BRYCE: In Committee of the Whole House.

Mr. HOZIER: When will the Eight Hours (Miners) Bill be taken?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I am unable to answer that at present; but it will not be till after the House has disposed of the Evicted Tenants Bill, the Equalisation of Rates Bill, and the Scotch Local Government Bill.

MOTION.

NATIONAL GALLERY.

Dr. KENNY (Dublin, College Green) said, he begged to move for unopposed Return No. 3.

Motion for—

"Return of the sums expended by the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery from 1884-5 to 1894, in the purchase of pictures from moneys provided by Parliament (in the same form as, and in continuation of, Supplement A to the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury for the year 1884)."—(*Dr Kenny.*)

Mr. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that if the Return was to be granted at all it should be complete. The hon. Member only referred to expenditure out of "moneys provided by Parliament," but the House ought to know the sums spent out of endowments, and also the bequests received.

Dr. KENNY said, he had no objection, but he did not know whether the Financial Secretary to the Treasury would consent to enlarge the Return.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The form may be amended to-morrow, and the Return then taken as unopposed.

Return deferred.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 124.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. ARCHIBALD GROVE (West Ham, N.) said, he wished to propose that it be an Instruction to the Committee that the provisions of the Bill be extended to West Ham. He moved this in the interests of a district where there was a large hardworking population who were heavily burdened in regard to rates. He must admit that there was no logic in the proposition which he put before the House. But then there was no logic—not an ounce of logic—in the Equalisation of Rates Bill itself. The distinguishing merit of the Bill was that there was in it a great deal of humanity, and that, in his opinion, far out-weighed logic. It was on grounds of humanity that he appealed to his right hon. Friend to admit this Instruction. His right hon. Friend in bringing in the Bill said that the richer districts out of their abundance should contribute to the needs of the poorer districts. He thought that he could conclusively prove that West Ham was one of the poorest districts——

Mr. H. L. W. LAWSON: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether the House can consider an Instruction relating to a district outsider the purview of the Bill?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the Instruction is in Order. Although West Ham is not in the Metropolitan area, it is in the police area, and it is quite in Order to move an Instruction to bring it within the scope of the Bill.

Mr. ARCHIBALD GROVE, resuming, said, that when his hon. Friend interrupted him he was about to show that West Ham stood in as great need of relief as any district in London. Its rateable value was £900,000, and its population was nearly 240,000. The rates amounted to close on 8s. in the £1. There was not a parish in the area of the County of London whose rates were as high as that. His right hon. Friend in introducing the Bill pointed out that some of the parishes in London had increased in their rates by 1s. 2d. in the last few years. But in West Ham the rates had increased by 1s. 6d. This was a great and growing burden. Since 1871 the population of West Ham had risen from 62,000 to 238,000—an abnormal rise. Hon. Gentlemen who had studied this Bill would see how closely such a rise in population affected the necessity for some form of relief. The demand he made was a just one, for West Ham contributed largely to the wealth of London. Every morning it poured in a stream of wealth - producers to the City and other parts of London. They laboured through the day to produce the wealth of London, and returned at night to the Borough of West Ham, which was thus responsible for their sanitary well-being. Apart from logic, he maintained that this was a strong common-sense argument why West Ham should be included in the benefits of the Bill. Nobody would deny that, to all intents and purposes, West Ham and London were inextricably joined. If his hon. Friend the Member for the Cirencester Division of Gloucestershire would take a walk with him, not down Fleet Street, but along the thoroughfare which led from London to West Ham, he would bet him half-a-crown—well, if that were not in Order, he would stake his opinion against that of the hon. Member—that the hon. Member when he passed the boundaries of Bow and Bromley and got into West Ham would not know where the one district began and the other ended, except that West Ham was the more charming locality. Why, then, should West Ham not be included in the benefits of this Bill? His right hon. Friend had said that London was unlike any other town in the country in having a large number of separate districts with separate management and separate rating powers. This statement entirely knocked the bottom out of the argument that they could not include West Ham in the Bill because it had a Mayor and Corporation of its own. And so far as having a Mayor and Corporation went, the City of London was in the same position. His right hon. Friend did not hesitate to go to the City when he wanted money, but when he was asked to give relief to a poor district like West Ham he said that he could not do so, because it was not in the area. On this point he might further call attention to the fact that the distribution of the fund provided under the Bill was to be by population. But no Government, however grandmotherly, could regulate the distribution of population. That regulated itself. They must further remember that this fund was not to be distributed according to expenditure, and that therefore the necessity of any district being under the control of a central body which administered the fund was absolutely done away with. Many hon. Members opposite had the interests of the poorer classes at heart. He was convinced that he would have their support. Around him were Radicals who professed—and he knew that their professions were true—that they had the interests of the poorer districts at heart in a paramount degree. He counted also on having their support. The Government, on its part, could not consistently refuse this plea of a poor locality for relief. But if the Government did refuse to accept this Instruction he was sure that the sense of the House would largely be with him.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to extend the provisions of the Bill to West Ham."—(*Mr. Archibald Grove.*)

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I am quite willing to admit many of the premises on which the claim of the hon. Member is founded. It is undoubtedly the fact that West Ham is a district where there is a vast population of labouring people, many of whom are closely connected with London and contribute to its wealth. It is also a fact that the rates of West Ham are very heavy; and if I acted from purely humanitarian motives, instead of according to Parliamentary logic, I should be inclined to accede to the view of the hon. Member. But if I were to act from motives of that kind, I might be subjected to appeals to include other districts where the population is poor and the rates are heavy, and which may in some sense be considered as part of London. I might be asked to include the districts of Croydon, Richmond, and Kingston, though I do not think that Richmond is a poor district. All these districts are beyond the Metropolitan area, and to include them in a Bill of this kind would be departing altogether from the object of the Bill. The proper course for my hon. Friend to pursue would be to advocate that West Ham should be brought within the Metropolitan District.

MR. ARCHIBALD GROVE: That question is at present under discussion, but while the grass is growing the steed is starving.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I am glad to be informed that there is a movement in West Ham in the direction of including it within the district of the London County Council. I believe the County Council are not unwilling to extend the boundaries, and if West Ham were within the Metropolitan area of the London County Council it would undoubtedly share the benefits of the Bill in common with the rest of London. But to share those benefits it should also contribute to the expenses of the County Council, the School Board, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and various other institutions in London. I hope it will not be considered necessary to further press this Instruction. Whilst sympathising with the object my hon. Friend has in view, I think he has gone the wrong way to work to accomplish it.

LORD G. HAMILTON (Middlesex, Ealing): I only rise to say that while the question raised by this Amendment is one of considerable importance, yet I agree with the President of the Local Government Board it is one which we cannot discuss at length to-day. No doubt in equity a strong case has been made for the inclusion of West Ham, but if it was so included there are many other districts in Middlesex on whose behalf an equally strong claim might be put forward. Tottenham, Edmonton, and Hornsey are districts very largely inhabited by poor persons, and the rates of the two former districts are higher than the rates of any part of the Metropolis which is under the control of the County Council. It is certain, however, that the Middlesex districts would not surrender their local independence for the slight pecuniary benefits they would obtain under this Bill if they came in under the London County Council. This is a question which must sooner or later come under the consideration of this House. If anyone will watch the shifting of London populations he will be surprised to see what changes are taking place. The older parts of London are becoming greatly depopulated, and while with the Metropolitan area of one and a-half to four miles from the Mansion House a considerable increase has taken place, a far greater relative increase has taken place in the area of from four to ten miles, and in no part more so than in the constituencies which I and some of my friends represent. Yet those who live in those districts are subjected practically to the same taxation as other parts of the Metropolis, and do not receive the relief which the richer parishes afford to the poorer parishes within the area. My belief is that the area of the County Council is already too large for its proper administration, and past history shows that such wide areas of administration have not worked satisfactorily. The remedy for the inequalities to which the hon. Gentleman has called attention will not be found in an extension of the area of the London County Council, but rather in its diminution. A strong central body might be established for certain purposes whilst the other parts of the Metropolitan area retain their local independence.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, that Richmond, Kingston, and the neighbouring districts of Surrey would never claim to be included in the Metropolitan area, notwithstanding any pecuniary benefits they might receive. He quite agreed, however, with what had fallen from his noble Friend, that this question could not be confined to one portion of the London boundary. Once raised it would have to be dealt with all round; and unless the House was prepared to greatly enlarge the scope of the Bill, they ought not to support this Instruction.

Sir J. LUBBOCK (London University) said, if this Amendment were accepted it would very much widen the scope of the Bill. Again, if they were to include other districts in the Metropolitan area, they must, in equity, take in those which were rated at a low figure as well as those which were rated heavily. It would be a bad argument for the City of London to say that highly-rated districts must be brought in and low-rated ones excluded. In fairness they must have both classes.

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I will only add one word to what has fallen from my right hon. Friend. I cannot agree with the President of the Local Government Board in his statement that it rests with the people of West Ham whether they will join in the Metropolitan area or not.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The application must be made by them.

Mr. GOSCHEN: But even if it were made it does not follow that it would be granted. We are now upon a question of the very greatest magnitude; and that is, What is the policy to be adopted with regard to that large population in the various extra-Metropolitan areas, which, nevertheless, in some sense, form part of London? although there is very little doubt the County Council would undertake to govern another 1,000,000 of population with the greatest lightness of heart. I think they have already got as much on their hands as they can manage, and I agree with my right hon. Friend beside me that it is impossible to look forward with any degree of confidence to increasing the area of the County Council. The policy must be a policy of decentralisation, so far as the outlying districts of London are concerned, with free Municipal Councils and other Local Bodies. With the constant expansion of London it is impossible to admit that the simple solution of every difficulty is to extend the area of government of the County Council. I quite agree with the right hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London that there ought to be no option in this matter. If we are to extend the circle, we must include both the highly-rated and the lowly-rated districts. It would never do to say that a poor district has merely to make application to the Local Government Board or to the House, and that then the other parts of London shall contribute towards its rates. I entirely share the view of the Government that the Instruction cannot possibly be entertained.

Question put, and negatived.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The next Instruction, that standing in the name of the hon. and gallant Member for Colchester, is not in Order. It proposes such sweeping changes that it practically constitutes a new Bill. The terms are vague; there is no limitation, and no indication is given to the Committee how the Instruction, if it were allowed, could be carried out. In these circumstances, I rule that the Instruction is out of Order.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he had to move the omission from the first sub-section of the words "for aiding the equalisation of rates," and the substitution for them of the words "in order to further a uniform system of expenditure for sanitary purposes." He moved this in no factious spirit; but he was bound to express his wonder that a question of such deep importance to the Metropolis as was embodied in the Bill had been brought forward at the fag-end of a Session. He was strongly in favour of what was called a just and equal distribution of the rates, and he agreed that the rates actually paid by various parts of London should as far as possible be made equal; but he ventured to assert that this Bill, which professed to bring about the equalisation, did not touch the most important point—namely, the question of valuation. They ought to have a uniform principle of valuation throughout the Metropolis. At the present time, however, the Overseers in some parishes adopted a very low assessment, while those in other parishes took a very high one, and in passing he would like to express his regret that the

Bill introduced by the London County Council to deal with these inequalities did not become law this Session. Surely the measure they were now discussing ought to have contained some provision dealing with these divergent valuations. It was a well-known fact that a house which bore a rental of £40 in one parish would fetch £60 in another parish. No doubt in some districts the rates were nominally lower than those charged in other and poorer districts, but the difference was more than made up in the higher rents charged in the lower-rated parishes. Much had been said about the well-managed parish of Islington, and he believed that no parish in the Metropolitan area was better managed—except that of St. Pancras. But why should Islington, if this Bill passed, only have to pay a 5s. rate, while Bermondsey paid 7s., Fulham 6s. 6d., and Rotherhithe 6s. 8d.? Again, the Bill did not really embody any system of equalising rates. If the Government had taken up this question thoroughly—and there were many among its members who had a strong grasp on commercial matters—if they had attempted to deal with the whole question of the Metropolitan finance, they would have——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that he is not confining himself to the Amendment.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER submitted with all respect that he was doing so, as he was attempting to show that the Bill did not carry out the principle of equalisation, and he was therefore moving the omission of that word.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot discuss the whole Bill on this Amendment.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER said, he was endeavouring to confine himself to the Amendment, the object of which was to advocate a uniform expenditure for sanitary purposes. The fact was, the Bill did not carry out equalisation in a true spirit. The basis of the population had been adopted, but it seemed to be forgotten that the day population of, for instance, the City of London, paid rates for their warehouses and places of business as well as for the houses in which they resided, and yet the City was not to receive any portion of this fund simply because these people lived in other districts at night.

MR. BARROW (Southwark, Bermondsey): I rise to Order. Is the hon. Member speaking to the Amendment?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have told the hon. Member that he is not keeping closely to his Amendment.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER replied, that he was keeping as closely to it as he could, and if the hon. Member for Bermondsey thought that because a sub-committee of the London County Council had drafted a Bill they were not to discuss, he could only say that he could not agree with him, and certainly should discuss it until stopped by the Committee of the House. If they were going to have a system of rate equalisation, let them carry it out properly. The promoters of this Bill seemed to have lost sight of what was known as the compounding system—a system which gave landlords a rebate of 20 or 30 per cent. in some districts. What did that mean? It meant that although the rate was nominally 7s. in a district, yet inasmuch as they were compounded in the case of three-fourths and even five-sixths of the houses, the actual rate paid was one-third less; and equalisation should be made to cover that. If they passed this scheme as it was, purely as a population basis, they gave to a vast number of rich landlords the sum of 3d. in the £1 in decreasing their rates with no decrease in rental. Out of 548,315 inhabited houses in London no fewer than 192,049 were let off 20 to 30 per cent. by the compounding system. In Bethnal Green, out of 16,000 houses there were 13,850 where the rates were compounded for, and the landlords received an abatement of 25 per cent.; that in Poplar, out of 7,500, 6,509 received an abatement of 15 per cent.; and that in Bow, out of 5,600 houses, 3,750 were compounded, the allowance to the landlords being 30 per cent. That was the great cause of leakage in the rates of London, and the system, in his opinion, had been greatly abused.

THE CHAIRMAN said, that a discussion of the compounding system on this Amendment was out of Order.

MR. GOSCHEN, on the point of Order, submitted that the equalisation of rates never could be carried out equitably under the system of allowances for compounding, the rates of allowance rendering it impossible to carry out an equal rate in the £1. It would be difficult to discuss the question unless they were clear upon the point how far equalisation was affected by compounding.

*THE CHAIRMAN said, he did not mean to suggest that a discussion on compounding would not be in Order on an Amendment properly raising the question, but it was not in Order on the present Amendment.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER said, he would confine his remarks to the question of a uniform system of expenditure, and contended that it would be a simple matter to carry out such a system. It would be very simple to take the superficial area of the roads in London and to take into consideration the proper expenditure for keeping the roads in order. If there were some authority to receive the funds for certain purposes, that authority to pay out of the common fund for road-making, lighting, paving, draining, and all sanitary work, and a proper sum allowed, such a system would work well and equitably. The present Bill was without logic and was inequitable in its incidence, but the Bill might be so drafted as really to carry out the intentions of the Government and fairly equalise rates all over London. But that could not be done merely by counting heads or by saying that because the County Council had built a lot of doss-houses in a certain district that district should receive a large proportion of the rates. Another great evil which would be caused by taking population as a basis was to give a premium to overcrowding. That would be very greatly against sanitary reform.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member, in a somewhat discursive speech, had touched a great number of topics which seemed altogether beyond the scope of discussion. He went into the question of valuation and compounding. A great deal might be said at the proper time upon both subjects, but he did not think it necessary to enter into them for the purposes of this Amendment. The hon. Member said the Bill did not carry out the principle of equalisation, and he proposed to remedy that by striking out the word "equalisation" and inserting other words which would entirely alter the object and principle of the Bill. The object was not to carry out a uniform system of sanitary administration; its object was to afford relief to the poorer parishes at the expense of the richer ones, and the Government hoped that in the main it would lead towards the equalisation of rates. It would be impossible completely to carry out equalisation of rates unless by a scheme setting up a central management for London. This was not the first time in its history that an attempt had been made to equalise the rates of London. It was done by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Goschen) in 1870, but his scheme left great anomalies behind, although he did not complain of that. The object of this Bill, as he said, was to give relief to the poorer classes, and the Bill would effect that object in a great number of cases. With regard to the rates of Islington, although the rates in other parts of the Metropolis during the current year had averaged 5s. 5d. in the £1, the rates of Islington had been 5s. 8d., or 3d. above the average. No parish would be called upon to contribute whose rates were now below the average in the possible single exception of Islington. The Bill would equalise the rating at least to the same extent as the right hon. Gentleman's (Mr. Goschen's) scheme of 1870; and if there were anomalies in the present proposal, there were at least as great anomalies arising from the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman. As for the Amendment, he repeated that the object of the Bill was to tend towards equalisation, and not the purpose of sanitary administration.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he hoped the Committee would see that this was one of the most important of the whole of the Amendments. He objected to the word "equalisation," because he thought it did not correctly describe the Bill. He wished to read a passage in the Report of the Chairman of the Local Government and Taxation Committee of the County Council:—

> "The object of this Bill is not to equalise existing rates."

That was the view of the Chairman of the County Council, who forced this Bill upon the Committee.

> "In the first place, no rateable value of the poorer parishes and a consequent abnormal increase in the rate necessary for any increase of expenditure may have the effect of deterring parishes from the efficient performance of sanitation."

The argument of the County Council was that it was not so much in order to equalise rates as to improve sanitation. He thought it would be seen that the omission of these words was perfectly logical, and was consistent in the views of those who really originated the Bill and recommended it to the Government.

Mr. KIMBER asked whether, by the use of the words "equalisation of rates," it was intended that where one parish was rated at 5s. and another at 7s. they were to be made wider apart or nearer together? The effect of the operation of the Bill would in many cases be to make the 7s. rate higher and the 5s. rate a great deal lower. How could the Bill be an equalising Bill if the equalisation fund was contributed to by those who paid the highest rates in the Metropolis? There would never be any perfect system of equalisation. What they might attain to was some system of equitable approximation, but this Bill would not accomplish that. In the case of Islington, where in 1892 the rate was 5s. 2½d., that was to be put down 2d. But St. Olave's, Southwark, in a rate of 5s. 10d., was to be put up 5d. Therefore, instead of an approximation there was a still further divergence of 8d. in the £1 between these two. In Wandsworth in 1892 the rate was 5s. 10d. Wandsworth was to have relief to the extent of 2d. Islington, already lower than Wandsworth, was to have relief to the extent of 3d. There were 15 parishes where the rates in 1892 were either less or not higher than those of St. Olave's, and received grants, while St. Olave's itself would pay 5¼d. He thought his hon. Friend (Mr. Webster) had done great service to the Government in moving to strike out of the Bill words which were false in fact when compared with the operative parts of the measure. The operative part of the Bill did not equalise, but diverged the rates of London. It might be said that the instance he had given was exceptional. Was it possible, however, that the principle of distribution according to population or any other principle of distribution which had the effect of diverting the rates instead of approximating them could be said to be in any sense whatever a principle of equalisation? It was preposterous and absurd to suppose so. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the effect of the distribution by population was that no parish which was rated more highly than the average would be levied upon for the proposed contribution. He (Mr. Kimber) pinned the right hon. Gentleman to that declaration, and he should by-and-bye ask him to insert in the Bill words to that effect. He knew, however, that it would clash very seriously with the principle of distribution by population, inasmuch as many parishes already above the average would either contribute, as in the case of St. Olave's, or would receive less, as in the case of Wandsworth, than parishes which were below the average. The right hon. Gentleman had also said that no parish which was below the average would, by the operation of the Bill, receive relief, and thereby have its rates brought down lower. He (Mr. Kimber) thought that there were cases of parishes below the average which would actually receive relief and thereby have their rates brought down. He should, therefore, later on ask for the insertion of an Amendment almost in the right hon. Gentleman's own words on that point. He thought that the words "for aiding the equalisation of the rates" ought to be omitted, but, at the same time, he thought it was necessary to insert the words which his hon. Friend (Mr. Webster) proposed to substitute for them.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, he understood the real object of the Bill to be to equalise the sanitary rates. Sub-section 4 of the first clause provided that amount of the poor rate was to be apportioned amongst the sanitary districts—that was to say, for sanitary purposes. Under these circumstances, it was not fair, by putting the words "for aiding the equalisation of the rates" in the forefront of the Bill, to make it appear that the measure would effect a general equalisation of the rates. If any words were to be substituted for these words they ought to be "for aiding the equalisation of the sanitary rate." These words would give a fair explanation of the object of the Bill. As a matter of fact, however, it was not necessary to put anything in the place of the words proposed to be omitted. It would be simpler to leave the case without any such words, because the enacting part of the clause was that the London County Council should form a certain fund which was to be raised in a certain way. He should prefer to have the words omitted without having any words substituted for them, but he should have no objection to the insertion of words "for the purposes specified in this Act." As far as he could see, the words now in the clause would mislead a very large number of people. He had heard some very strong expressions used by his constituents with reference to what the clause really did and what it did not do, and he certainly thought it would be better to strike out an expression which was obviously misleading.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) agreed with the hon. Baronet who had just sat down, that the words proposed to be omitted were absolutely misleading. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill said the object of the measure was not to equalise the rates, but to make the richer parishes in London contribute towards the rates of the poorer parishes.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: What I said was that the object was not to effect complete equalisation.

MR. WHITMORE said, the right hon. Gentleman had distinctly stated that the object of the Bill was to oblige rich parishes in London to contribute towards the rates of the poorer parishes. He (Mr. Whitmore) was not prepared to dispute the wisdom of that policy, but he contended that it was a distinctly different policy from that of equalising the rates. He thought it would be better, with the object of preventing hopes being raised that would not be realised, to omit the words "for aiding the equalisation of the rates" without putting anything in their place.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square), rising to Order, asked whether the Amendment would be put in such a way as to exclude an Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for the City (Mr. Alban Gibbs), to insert the word "sanitary"?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must put the Amendment according to the Rule. I must put the Amendment to leave out the words "for aiding the equalisation of the rates," and the Question will be that those words stand part of the clause.

MR. GOSCHEN: If this Amendment were withdrawn, it would be possible to insert the words "sanitary"?

THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

*COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich) said, there was no doubt that the statement in the first clause that the object of the Bill was to equalise the rates of London was a little too wide. It would not be right to equalise the rates of London if it could be done. There were many parishes which had during many years paid off a vast number of loans, and had thereby put themselves in a better position than newer parishes who still had all their paving and sewering to do. If the rates were equalised, those parishes which had paid up the loans incurred for sewering and paving would have to pay over again for doing similar work for other parishes. The reason why the rates of Islington were so low was that the people of Islington had paid off nearly all their loans. At the present moment the Islington rate for loans was just above 2d. in the £1, whilst in St. Luke's the rate amounted to 1s. 4d. He thought it would make everything a great deal clearer if the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) would make the words read "for aiding the equalisation of rates in London for sanitary purposes." It would not do to use the words "sanitary rate," for there was no rate in London that was so named. If the words "for sanitary purposes" were inserted, it would narrow the discussion and prevent a repetition of that misunderstanding which had been occasioned by the supposition that the Bill would equalise all the rates of London. He himself, and he had no doubt most Metropolitan Members, especially those who represented poor districts, sincerely desired that some Bill for equalising sanitary expenditure should be passed, because the health of London was a matter in which everybody in London, whether he was rich or poor, was interested. There must be some controlling authority to see that the money received was carefully and judiciously expended. A largely increased expenditure for sanitary purposes had been caused by the Public Health (London) Act, 1891. A vast number of Sanitary Inspectors and Medical Officers had been appointed under that Act, and this had been the chief cause of the increased expenditure for sanitary purposes. Under that Act the London County Council was the controlling authority. The County Council had made bye-laws, and had the right of interfering where any negligence on the part of the Local Authority was made clear to them, whilst the Local Government Board had the right to hold inquiries into the conduct of the Local Authorities. That being so, London already possessed an efficient controlling authority, and all that was needed now was money to make the sanitary work satisfactory. The objection to having a common fund from which everyone could draw was that it might result in greater expenditure beyond necessary requirements.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That question does not arise now.

COLONEL HUGHES went on to say that he did not think the sanitary expenditure in any parish had ever been less than 6d. in the £1, so that the new rate would, after all, be a contribution of less than the minimum expenditure in every parish in London. He could well understand that the method of distribution by population was a bone of contention. It had been described as a rough-and-ready system. No doubt it was very rough, and at the same time it was very ready, because it would be necessary to refer to the last Census in order to ascertain the proportion which each parish must receive of the fund. There was one point as to distribution by population which he did not think had been sufficiently looked at.

THE CHAIRMAN: That question does not arise on this Amendment.

COLONEL HUGHES said, that a system of expenditure, though called uniform, would probably be anything but uniform when every parish had the right to go to the common fund. He saw that on this particular Amendment he was not able to say all he could have wished to say.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, that some of the misapprehension existed as to the scope and object of the Bill it was probably due to the short title of the measure. A more correct description of the object of the Bill was found in the long title, which ran—"A Bill to make better provision for the equalisation of rates as between the different parts of London." That, he thought, was accurately descriptive of the object of the Bill. There might be differences of opinion as to whether that object was effected or not, but at any rate that description was better than the other. There was an important word in the first sub-section which had been overlooked—namely, the word "aiding." The Bill did not say that the rates would be equalised, but the measure, to quote the words in the first clause, was one "for aiding the equalisation of the rates in London." All that either the Bill or the Amendment seemed to him to contemplate was a tendency in the direction of greater equalisation. He would not discuss whether that object was effected or not, but it seemed to him that the long title correctly described the Bill. The criticism offered upon the first words of the Bill was well founded. It was not a Bill for the equalising of rates, but a Bill for the greater equalisation of the incidence of the sanitary rate. He was in favour of the Bill, and the parish he represented had petitioned in favour of it, but he thought it would be right to make the short title of the Bill accord more closely with its object. As Islington had been referred to, he would give some authoritative figures as to the rates in that parish. He did not wish to put it forward as a case he was advocating, but it had been made a typical ground of argument; therefore, it was desirable that the figures as they existed should be accurately and authoritatively put before the Committee. He had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the average rate in London, so far as it could be ascertained, with some difficulty, was 5s. 5d. The average rate in Islington for the past three years was 5s. 4½d., which was a close approximation to the average rate of London, but the rate was now 5s. 8½d., the increase being due to justifiable and even meritorious causes, Islington having been one of the first parishes to effectually discharge the duties imposed by the Act of 1891. No parish had done that work more efficiently and thoroughly. The hon. Member for Woolwich had said very properly that it would be inequitable to absolutely equalise the rates, and he had given Islington as an illustration. He (Sir A. Rollit) would like to put before the Committee an illustration of how inequitable it would be. The figures of the loans in connection with local purposes were these. The percentage of loans to rateable value throughout London was £16·57, but in consequence of the good administration and economy of Islington the percentage there was only £11·42. To equalise the rates rigidly would be unjust to parishes that were exceptionally well administered; therefore, all they could ask for or hope for was that which was contemplated by the Bill—namely, a distinct tendency in the direction of equality. Islington had been well administered, and desired to carry out the London Health Act to the full. The petition of the Vestry stated that the help and encouragement of Parliament to this Act would be materially advantageous, not only to the district he represented—which in many parts was a poor district—but also to contiguous portions of London which could not fail to be benefited by just action in matters of common concern.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, the hon. Member who had just sat down naturally spoke favourably of Islington. No doubt if the present rates in Islington were compared with those of years ago, it would be found that they had risen, but the same thing might be said of every parish of the Metropolis. The hon. Member had admitted that the title of the Bill was misleading. He (Sir J. Lubbock) believed that a great deal of the popularity of the Bill was, no doubt, owing to the misleading character of its title. The right hon. Gentleman had told them on the Second Reading that under the Bill no lightly-rated parish would have to receive and no heavily-rated parish would have to pay. But neither to-night nor on the Second Reading had the right hon. Gentleman attempted to deal with the case of the compound householder. He would not weary the Committee by going again over the figures stated by the hon. Member for East St. Pancras, but let him take the case of Bethnal Green. There were there 13,800 compounders out of 16,800 householders. The rates there were 6s. 10d., and it was a farce to say that that amount was like similar rates in other districts where there were no compounders at all. If allowance were made for compounding, it would be found that the rates in Bethnal Green would not be more than 5s. 7d., or only 2d. more than the average. He did not say there was no answer to the argument that had been brought forward, but he said they had not received an answer from the Government as to their intentions, and it seemed to him that it was practically unanswerable. Let them take two districts, one in which there was no compounding and the other in which the great majority of the houses were compound houses with an allowance of 25 per cent., and contrast them with the real rates paid. They were told it was the desire of the Government in this Bill to relieve poor districts, but what did they mean by a poor district? Of course they must mean to relieve the poor parishes, but the real people who would gain under this Bill would not be the tenants but the landlords, and he thought his right hon. Friend in charge of the Bill would not dispute that, because not so long ago in this House the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. Gladstone) established the fact that the rates were ultimately paid by the occupier of the land. In these cases of leasehold tenancies, and more especially in the case of compound householders it was the landlords and not the tenants who would gain, and that fact was proved before the Committee who inquired into the question last year. The landlords in what were called the rich districts were no more rich than the landlords in the poor districts. They knew that in many of the poor districts there were large blocks of land held by one single owner, and they were no poorer than the owners in what were called the richer parts of the Metropolis, and he believed that in the City of London probably the property was more divided than in any other district, because a large amount of the property was held by Insurance Offices and by Land Companies consisting of small owners, many of them women and trustees for children, who had put their money into them because they were considered to be safe and sound investments. His right hon. Friend, therefore, would see that he had not yet dealt with the argument that by this Bill they would to a great extent not give a boon to the tenant but to the landlord, and not to the small landlord, but in a great number of cases would give an enormous advantage to the wealthy landlord.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS (London) said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to omit these words that were under discussion, but if the Amendment of his hon. Friend to insert the word "sanitary" were accepted he should be glad to leave the words in, as they would then have some meaning. It appeared to him that the equalisation of rates would be aided very little, and in many cases the proposal of the Bill would make it more unequal than before. He alluded to the case of the City, which was always assumed as being a place that was extremely low rated. Yesterday he asked a question with regard to St. Martin Outwich in which he stated that the rates were now 6s. 9d. He was sorry that he was betrayed into a slight error, as he included a rate of 2d. which he ought not to have included. The rates were made up partly of a poor rate of 2s. 8d., the Police, Consolidated, School Board and other rates, 2s. 9d., making 5s. 5d., and in addition to that there was a rate which was levied in lieu of tithes, which was 1s. 2d., bringing the rates up to 6s. 7d. His right hon. Friend who brought in this Bill objected to his bringing this tithe rate at all; but he could not understand why he objected, as it was a rate that was collected by the Local Authorities, and fell very heavily upon those who had to pay it. If it was requisite to show that any parish paid more than another they could neglect to take into the account any additional rate that was paid, and in that way they could easily get the payments of a particular parish down, but he thought he was entitled to say the rates were 6s. 7d. But even if they excluded the tithe rate the other rates came to 5s. 5d., or within a fraction of that sum—it might be just a little less—and that, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own showing, was the average rate of Metropolitan parishes. The figures he had before him put the average at 5s. 3d., but what he had to pay rates for was the parish of St. Martin Outwich, and he had taken that parish because it happened to be the parish in which he himself had spent the best part of the last 25 years of his life.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Does he include the tithe rate in the 5s. 5d.?

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS said, he had explained that he did not, and if they included the tithe rate the rates were 6s. 7d. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of this parish in rather a sneering way in answering the question yesterday, and said it contained 25 houses and had a population of 102, but he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that the valuation was considerably above the average valuation of city parishes. Though, as he had said, he had spent the best part of his life for the last 25 years in this parish, by this Bill he was not allowed to be considered as one of the population. If he went into other city parishes he should find they had similarly high returns; in fact, since he came to the House to-day, a paper had been put into his hands giving the rates for St. Mary Woolmer, Lombard Street, and this paper put the rates at 5s. 4d., without counting the rate in lieu of tithe. He thought it was hard upon them to increase their rates, which were already up to the average, by 5½d., and then tell them it was done in the name of equalisation. There were certain things in this Bill which commended themselves to everybody, and one of them was the attempt to increase the efficiency of the expenditure for sanitary purposes. He freely admitted that was a thing they ought all to desire, and would not object to pay for if it could be shown the incidence of the payment was fair, and he could not, therefore, see why the Government had not at once accepted the Amendment of his hon. Friend. He trusted they would accept the Amendment of his hon. Friend, to add, after "rates," the words "for sanitary purposes," and, if so, he would not press his Amendment.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, this was obviously an unjust and misleading Bill, the title of it being absolutely misleading. The Bill sought to impose additional taxation of £31,258, divided between the parishes of Islington, which did not want it, and which was to have £21,320, and Shoreditch, which was represented by the hon. Gentleman behind the President of the Local Government Board, which was to have the balance. He did not wonder the hon. Member for Islington was in favour of the Bill, because it proposed to impose an extra tax of nearly 4d. in the £1 upon St. George's, Hanover Square, and give it to Islington and Shoreditch. He trusted it would be made clear that the Bill was not a Bill for the equalisation of rates, and that the title was most misleading and unfair.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) thought the right hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir J. Lubbock) had very little experience or knowledge of local administration in the East End of London, and the right hon. Gentleman had certainly shown a complete ignorance of the practice of compounding; the commission paid to the owner was a charge for collection; it was a payment for services rendered in a poorer district.

Sir J. GOLDSMID: Twenty-five per cent.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, the hon. Baronet, Member for one of the Divisions of St. Pancras, said it was 25 per cent. Yes, but when they spoke of that, they must remember that it was a guarantee to the Local Authority against empties. Those owners who got an allowance of 25 per cent. agreed with the Local Authority to pay the rate upon the houses, whether empty or not.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID said, he might perhaps be permitted to explain that some authorities might allow 25 per cent., whereas in many others only 10 or 15 per cent. was allowed, so that there was a difference in the system of allowances for compounding.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, the parish that he represented gave 15 per cent. for compounding, with an additional 10 per cent. where the guarantee was given, and he was not prepared to say that was excessive. The point he rose to emphasise was this: that in a poor district the difficulty of collection was one of the disadvantages as compared with rich districts, just as its pauperism was one of its disadvantages, and, like the burden of pauperism, it had to be paid for. He would like to say a word upon the Amendment they were discussing. It had been suggested that the words "for sanitary purposes" should be added after the word "rates," and it was regarded as if that would not make any substantial alteration in the Bill, but only make it clear.

The CHAIRMAN: That has not yet been done. The Amendment before the Committee is to leave out the words "for aiding the equalisation of the rates."

Mr. PICKERSGILL: In that case I will reserve what I have to say.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, it appeared to him that the objection to the whole sub-section lay in the words "equalisation of the rates." A reference had been made concerning Islington, and he agreed that one of the great objections to what was called equalisation of the rates was due to the fact that Islington had been so well managed for so many years. He thought it was obviously unfair that because the rates were low in consequence of good administration, a penalty should attach to that parish because it managed its affairs well. What went against the idea of an equalisation of rates Bill was efficiency. He would press the right hon. Gentleman to bear in mind what was the object of the whole discussion concerning Islington. There had been a sort of aim all through to make out that the rates of Islington were higher than they really were. The County Council placed them at 5s., they had been at 5s. 2d., and they were now 5s. 8d., and did not that suggest that the whole tendency of this Bill would be to make those parishes were the rates were low spend more money in order not to come within the taxing powers of this Bill, and he candidly said he feared there was great danger in that? The fact that this Bill was called an Equalisation of Rates Bill might tend to equalise the rates by levelling them all up, to the detriment of the ratepayers. Where the administration of parishes was good and the expenditure low, it would be looked upon as a crime. Therefore, they were doing one of the worst things possible; they were inducing a tendency that would tend to increase the expenditure, and making that increased expenditure a reason for getting larger grants. This, to his mind, was a serious danger, and he thought they ought to put in some such words as had been suggested, to show this money was to be used not only for equalisation, but for some special purpose like sanitation. Unless they did that they would not safeguard the danger that was looming in the near distance; therefore, he strongly supported the idea, and wondered the Government had not accepted it. He thought they should put in some words to show this was for the equalisation of sanitation, and not for general equalisation, and he considered there was very great force in the argument that they should equalise the sanitation rate; for it did not merely affect the locality, it affected the property and health of the whole town. If an epidemic broke out in one district every other district was affected by it, and therefore it was fair and proper that no parish, however poor, should be allowed to escape from contributing to the sanitary rate.

*MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said, that as Islington had been so much referred to he might be allowed to make a few remarks, and all the more so because he could assure the Committee that he had not the least intention of pleading the cause of Islington, which had been so admirably pleaded by his two hon. Friends and colleagues, to whose remarks he could add nothing. All had admitted that Islington was a parish that had nothing to apologise for either as regarded the economy or the efficiency of its management, but he had risen simply to ask the Government if they could see their way to accept the Amendment, either that which had been proposed by his hon. Friend the Member for East Pancras (Mr. Webster) or the modification of it proposed by his hon. and gallant Friend behind him. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had explained this was not a Bill for the equalisation of rates, though it was a Bill tending towards it, but surely it was very essential to consider what were the purposes towards which the equalisation pointed, and to which the rate could be properly applied. Although, as his hon. Friend the Member for North Islington (Mr. Bartley) had said just now, the sanitary expenditure was the one item of local administration which he approved and which the House would not desire to see too rigid an economy in, still he believed that in sanitation a great deal of economy was possible without affecting efficiency and a great deal of extravagance without promoting it. He would not go into the figures at any length in support of that view, but he might give one instance from his own parish of Islington. They spent in 1892-3 in Islington, with an area of 3,107 acres, the sum of £6,313 on sewage works, whilst in St. Pancras, with an area of only 2,670 acres, they spent no less a sum than £14,350. And it was material at this point to add that the population of Islington was 319,000, representing a density of 102·65 to the acre, whilst the population of St. Pancras was 234,000, or a density of 88·71 to the acre. He mentioned these figures, not for the purpose of reflecting upon St. Pancras, but to show that even in sanitation there was room for economy and great possibilities for extravagance. But when they came to lighting and street expenditure, and this was germane to the Amendment, the question was quite different. In Islington—and he took his own constituency, as that was admitted to be a model constituency—he found that with an acreage of 3,107, they had spent £14,026 in 1891-92 in lighting, whilst in Shoreditch, with only 643 acres—about one-fifth that of Islington—they spent £5,713, or not far short of half the expenditure of Islington. His hon. Friend the Member for South St. Pancras (Sir J. Goldsmid) pointed out that many parishes were about to engage in the luxury of electric lighting, and that the hon. Member's own parish was about to do so; he also knew from his experience on the London County Council that many parishes were about to enjoy this luxury, and he did not see why they should not, provided they paid for it; but what possible advantage could it be to Hammersmith whether Bethnal Green was lighted with the electric light or not, and they would probably never learn anything about it until their rates reminded them of it? Surely if there was any one particular purpose of expenditure which was more local than another, and less general, which had a less right to be equalised, it was that of general lighting and illuminating. And the same considerations applied to paving and scavenging improvements. He found again that in Islington they spent £54,681, in 1891-2, in scavenging, whilst St. Pancras, with a population of 234,000, two-thirds only of the population of Islington, they spent, £53,704, or 98 per cent. of the expenditure of Islington. Camberwell, with a larger area, 4,450 acres, and a larger population, spent £39,400, or only three-fifths. He had ventured to put these figures before the Committee, not, as he had said, to reflect upon the expenditure of the various parishes upon matters within their own control, but for the purpose of impressing upon the Committee that if they were going to equalise the rates of London, or make a contribution towards them—and he was in no way opposed to it—it should be in respect of purposes which were general—which the whole of London was interested in, and in regard to which economy could be practised and extravagance forbidden. He hoped, therefore, that the Amendment of his hon. Friend below him would be accepted. In conclusion, he wished to thank the House for the extreme kindness they showed to him when, on the Second Reading, he was indisposed, and for the very sympathetic inquiries that had been made regarding his health.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he was not without hope the Government would see their way to leave these words in, but to accept the Amendment which he understood would be moved by the hon. Member for Woolwich (Colonel Hughes) to insert the words "for sanitary purposes." He was sure it would be satisfactory to many persons in the House if they could arrive at a unanimous conclusion on this matter. The right hon. Gentleman would see this was not approached with any contentious or Party spirit, but they were really anxious to give this Bill the character which it deserved, and which he believed to a great extent the Government wished it to have. What they had to be clear upon was this: Was this a Bill simply to help the poorer parishes, or was it a Bill which was specially intended to assist those parishes where the expenditure for sanitary purposes could not be fairly carried out because of the poverty of those parishes? He would frankly say that when he looked at the expenditure for sanitary purposes he found the differences were so great, the variety of burden was so conspicuous, that, representing a rich parish, as he did, it would be perfectly fair, as regarded those sanitary purposes, that further contribution should be made. He expressed that view the other day on the Second Reading, and the whole House was unanimous in this: that they wished to assess the poorer parishes with the view to their carrying out efficiently those burdens placed upon them by the Public Health Act of 1891. If it were the fact that the expenditure for sanitary purposes was not to be higher than 6d. the right hon. Gentleman might say that in limiting the grant to sanitation there was an attempt to escape the burden. But there was no promise of that in the Bill. What was done in the case of the richer might be extended to the poorer parishes. It had been pointed out that the whole of the contribution could be easily spent on the purposes of the Public Health Act alone. Why not, therefore, give the Bill its proper character, and state on the forefront of the measure that it was not merely to aid rates, but to assist in efficient sanitation? The House ought to take care to avoid the possibility of the whole sum being spent in reduction of rates, and not a penny on better sanitation. From the speech of the President of the Local Government Board alone it was clear that the duties under the Public Health Act were not equally well carried out in all districts. He would not detain the House upon the subject of equalisation further than to place before it a few figures in a different direction to those hitherto dealt with. The hon. Member for Woolwich had referred to the question of control in regard to carrying out the provisions of the Public Health Act throughout the Metropolis. The great differences in this respect had been overlooked on account of the poverty of certain districts; but if more money were placed at the disposal of those districts, further measures should be taken to remedy the inequalities. Looking at the matter only from the point of view of differences of value and the amount received by various parishes, there was no tendency at all to equalisation in the Bill. Bethnal Green received 8·46d. and Mile End Old Town 7·62d.; while another poor district like Bermondsey only received 3·38d., and Shoreditch only 2·67d. Was there any possible justification for differences of that kind? There was no information to show that there was the slightest difference in the poverty of these parishes. Being without precise statistics for those districts, they were, of course, in the dark, and really they had very little information upon the details of the Bill. What they had certainly showed was that they were making very little progress in the direction of equalisation. His hon. Friend had proved conclusively that that was a misleading title; but it would be satisfactory not to have to take the sense of the House on the words "for sanitary purposes," and if the Government would meet that suggestion he would ask his hon. Friend to withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that it was generally admitted that the words "for aiding the equalisation of the rates" should remain in. They adequately described the object of the Bill, and without implying that equalisation was completed by it. The purpose, according to the Act of 1870, and according to the title of this Bill, was to provide for equal distribution of the charge over the Metropolis. It was very uncertain what would be meant by the words "for sanitary purposes." The question was whether expenditure upon streets and roads should be included. He was informed that the average expenditure over London under the Public Health Act was not more than 3d. in the £1 for sanitary purposes; and therefore, if the description were limited to sanitary purposes only, the object of the Bill would be to a great extent defeated. He thought it better to leave the words as they stood, with the direction contained in the sub-section, which showed that in the application of this money the Local Authorities were to meet the requirements of the Public Health Act. Therefore, he could not accept the Amendment.

Lord G. HAMILTON said, that the right hon. Gentleman's speech showed that the money, which would go from the richer to the poorer parishes, was not to be devoted to those certain definite purposes to which everyone thought it was to be devoted. A considerable portion of money apparently would not go for those purposes. It was perfectly clear that the Bill was providing for the payment of money without stipulating what the purposes were to which it was to be applied.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER asked leave to withdraw his Amendment, the discussion having brought out many important facts with reference to the rating of London.

Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester) objected to the withdrawal of the Amendment, as that would mean that the words proposed to be left out would stand part of the Bill, and their inclusion would exclude subsequent Amendments of his own. In the first place, they would not be consistent with various other Amendments, and in the next, he could not see his way to allowing the Bill to go forth under false pretences. If they were allowed to stand, subsequent parts of the Bill would also have to be adopted. He agreed, of course, that to equalise every rate in London was impossible. Everybody knew that. If certain parts of London were to be allowed to indulge in particular expenditure, they must bear that expenditure themselves. It was absolutely impossible to carry out a scheme of equalisation of rates, so far as a rate common to the whole of the Metropolis was concerned, until a Bill was brought in dealing with the question of assessment and rateable value. They would have to deal with the rates of the London County Council and Metropolitan Asylums Board and the Metropolitan sanitary rate. He had been spending three or four days with a draftsman, for the purpose of framing Amendments to the Bill, and had been told that the words "for aiding" in this place meant nothing of the kind, if it was intended to facilitate the rating of London. The one thing which this Bill did not do was to equalise the Metropolitan rates. He would not go into the merits of equalisation. The House knew all about the "common or garden" arguments on that question already. If it was open to the President of the Local Government Board to oppose the Amendment on the ground of the merits of the Bill, it was equally open to him to oppose the Bill on its demerits. Three previous efforts had been made to deal with the question—first in 1867, again in 1870, and also in 1888. The present measure was the fourth attempt to deal with the question, and he could not congratulate the Government on their scheme. He thought that it was one of the most ridiculous attempts which had been made by a responsible Government to deal with an important question.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, in reference to his hon. Friend's objection to the Amendment being withdrawn, that he was in favour of the words "in order to aid in the equalisation of rates" being left in. The object was for a further equalisation for sanitary purposes, and he hoped his hon. Friend would not take a course which would practically entail a Division.

Question put, and agreed to.

COLONEL HUGHES asked, whether this would prevent the words "for sanitary purposes" being inserted?

THE CHAIRMAN ruled that, although by implication the whole of the hon. Member's Amendment had been made, it would be in Order for an hon. Member to move the insertion of the words "for sanitary purposes" after "London."

COLONEL HUGHES then moved an Amendment, in page 1, line 5, providing that

"an equalisation fund should be formed for aiding the equalisation of the rates in London for sanitary purposes."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 5, after the word "London," to insert the words "for sanitary purposes."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 66; Noes 135.—(Division List, No. 208.)

MR. R. G. WEBSTER had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

Page 1, line 5, leave out all after "London," to end of line 15, page 2, and insert—

"(1) There shall be a fund called the Metropolitan Common Municipal Fund, raised according to the provisions of this Act by contributions from the several parishes and places in the Metropolis (in this Act referred to as the Common Municipal Fund).

(2) There shall be a receiver of the Common Municipal Fund (in this Act referred to as the Receiver), who shall be from time to time appointed by and shall be removable by the Local Government Board, and shall receive such salary, and give such security (if any) as the Council direct.

(3) The Receiver shall open an account with the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, intituled 'The account of the Receiver of the Metropolitan Common Municipal Fund for the time being.'

(4) The Local Government Board shall from time to time assess on the several parishes, districts, and places in the Metropolis the amounts of their respective contributions to the Common Municipal Fund in proportion to the annual rateable value of the property therein comprised to be determined according to the valuation lists, or where there are none, according to the latest poor rate for the time being for the parish, district, or place, or on such other basis as the Local Government Board from time to time direct.

(5) The Local Government Board shall from time to time issue to the Sanitary Authority of each parish, district, or place a precept under the Seal of the Local Government Board requiring them to pay the amount of their contribution therein specified in the manner and within the time therein prescribed, and the Sanitary Authority shall accordingly raise the amount of their contribution out of the sewers and general rates of the parish, district, or place, and shall pay the same into the Bank of England to the credit of the account of the Receiver; and no such precept shall be liable to be removed into any court of law by *certiorari* or otherwise, nor shall any order of the Sanitary Authority, or any rate made after the passing of this Act, be liable to question in any such Court on the ground of its having been made wholly or partly in furtherance of any such precept. Provided always that the Sanitary Authority shall be entitled to have credit in part payment of their contribution for the amount which may be repayable to them out of the Common Municipal Fund, under the precept of the Local Government Board as hereinafter mentioned, in respect of expenditure during the preceding year.

(6) In order to obtain payment of the amount of the contribution to the Common Municipal Fund, payable in respect of any place where there is no poor rate, the Local Government Board shall from time to time issue to the masters of the bench, treasurer, governors, or other body or persons having the chief control or authority there, a precept requiring them or him to pay the amount of contribution therein specified, in the manner and within the time therein prescribed, and they or he shall pay the same accordingly.

(7) In every such place the masters of the bench, treasurer, governors, or other body or persons may levy on the several persons occupying rateable property therein the amount of contribution so paid by them or him by means of rates in the nature of a sewers and a general rate, and for that purpose may employ and remunerate collectors and shall have the like powers as are for the time being vested in overseers for the purposes of the making, assessing, levying, and collecting of poor rate.

(8) If any contribution to the Common Municipal Fund required by the Local Government Board to be paid by any Sanitary Authority, masters of the bench, treasurer, governors, or other body or persons is not duly paid, the receiver shall, in addition to any other remedy which any person has for the time being against Sanitary Authorities, have the like remedy for recovery from them or him, in the receiver's own name, of the contribution, or of so much thereof as is not paid, as Sanitary Authorities have for the time being for recovery from overseers of contributions of parishes: And for that purpose the precept of the Local Government Board requiring the contribution shall be conclusive evidence of the amount thereof and of the liability thereto of the party sued.

(9) After each yearly audit the auditors shall, within such time and in such manner as the Local Government Board from time to time direct, certify to the Council the amount actually expended by each parish, district, or place in respect of expenses which are to be repaid out of the Common Municipal Fund; and the Council shall, by precept under their seal, direct their receiver to repay out of that fund to the Sanitary Authority of the parish,

district, or place the several sums so expended, or such part or parts thereof as the Council shall think proper, and the amount repaid shall be applied by the Sanitary Authority in aid of the funds chargeable with the expenses in respect of which such repayment shall be made.

(10) The salaries of the receiver and his assistants, and all expenses incurred by him in the execution of this Act, shall be paid out of the Common Municipal Fund.

(11) The account of the receiver at the Bank of England shall be drawn on in such manner and according to such regulations as the London County Council from time to time by order direct."

The hon. Member said that, with the permission of the Chairman, he should only at present move the first four lines of the Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must point out where he proposes to insert these lines.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER: I propose to leave out all after "London" to end of line 15, and insert—

(1) "There shall be a fund called the Metropolitan Common Municipal Fund, raised according to the provisions of this Act by contributions from the several parishes and places in the Metropolis (in this Act referred to as the Common Municipal Fund)."

The CHAIRMAN: I must inform the hon. Member of an objection to this Amendment which I have already pointed out, and which is this: He proposes an Amendment which is, in effect, to negative the whole clause. Wherever it is proposed to do that, the rule is for an hon. Member to vote against the clause, and bring up a new clause. He proposes to leave out all the words after the word "London" to the end of line 15. Such an Amendment is out of Order.

Mr. BARTLEY (for Mr. Banbury) moved, in page 1, line 6, leave out "London County Council," and insert "Local Government Board." He thought that many hon. Members would agree that the management and assessment of this special rate should be in the hands of the Local Government Board. There was no doubt that the London County Council was a body which entered very keenly into matters political which it was not desirable to mix up with this special form of taxation. There was a general feeling amongst all parties that the Local Government Board would be a more impartial authority to administer the rate. He acknowledged that the Local Government Board might say they had enough to do already in connection with their respective duties. But they must remember that this was a very large question. It was the beginning, probably, of a larger extension of assimilation and equalisation of rates, and it was highly desirable that the responsible body which regulated it should be one in which everybody had confidence. He did not wish to say a word against the London County Council, but they must acknowledge, whatever their views, that the London County Council did take somewhat extreme views concerning political matters, and many hon. Members representing London constituencies felt that the handing over of this matter to the County Council was open to very grave objections. He did not for a moment say that the London County Council would not administer the fund fairly, but still the feeling would be that there was a suspicion of political bias. He ventured to say that inasmuch as this was a new departure it would be wiser to avoid such a suspicion, and he, therefore, hoped the Government would accept this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 6, to leave out the words "London County Council," and insert the words "Local Government Board." — (*Mr. Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'London County Council' stand part of the Clause."

*Sir J. GOLDSMID said, he did not think that the proposal of the hon. Member was quite consistent with the speech that he made on an Amendment he introduced on the Second Reading of the Bill, in which he invited the House to increase rather than diminish the powers of the County Council. As he had often said in this House, he was neither a supporter nor an opponent of the London County Council, but this was really an administrative act of very great simplicity, and he could not see why the London County Council could not perform it just as well or even better than the Local Government Board. He remembered when the Local Government Act as a Bill was being discussed in the House, the then President of the Local Government Board asked the Committee not to put too much duty upon that body, because they were already overwhelmed with all kinds of administrative work. Therefore, he thought that a matter of this kind, which was very simple, and which would have to be carried through on lines fairly fixed, might be entrusted to the London County Council, and need not be added to the multifarious duties of the Local Government Board. He hoped, therefore, his hon. Friend would not press his Amendment.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE remarked that, after the observations of the hon. Baronet who had just sat down, it was unnecessary for him to make any lengthened remarks on this point. The Local Government Board was not a Rating Board, and had no rating powers at all. The question was, Which was the best authority to levy the rate? It was merely an administrative question, and, in their opinion, that duty should be performed by the London County Council, which was the Rating Authority, and which had the power of levying rates, whereas, on the other hand, the Local Government Board had not that power. They would be entrusting them with new powers for administrative purposes, and as no principle was involved he hoped the hon. Gentleman would withdraw his Amendment.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that surely the right hon. Gentleman forgot the duties of the Local Government Board in connection with the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, they did not levy the rate.

MR. GOSCHEN said, it was not necessary that the County Council should levy the rate. The contributions could be got in exactly the same way as in the case of the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, so that he did not think it was perfectly candid of the right hon. Gentleman to put that forward as a crushing argument against this Amendment. It appeared to him that this duty was more analogous to that performed by the Local Government Board than any of the duties performed by the County Council. When they came to the Bill itself, the machinery for carrying out the proposal of the Government was not at all clear. The Bill appeared to be drawn on the principle of putting as little in it as possible. That might be good for Parliamentary purposes, but, at the same time, it did not clear up many of the administrative difficulties. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman that the Local Government Board had no power of levying a rate was not in any way conclusive against the proposal of his hon. Friend, for it appeared to him the same duty might be put upon the officers of the Local Government Board, which they had in connection with the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. He was sorry that the Amendment of his hon. Friend (Mr. R. G. Webster) had been ruled out of Order, because upon that they might have argued whether the whole machinery of the Common Poor Fund was not a better machinery than that which was in the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had made it very difficult for them to move Amendments through the whole of this being put in the one clause. The machinery was in this clause, the purposes and the contributions were in this clause, although they were perfectly different matters. He hoped that consideration, at all events, would enable them to have such reasonable latitude in discussing their Amendments as would make it possible for them really to discuss this Bill properly. He did not know that upon this particular Amendment it was proper to do so; but he would venture to suggest that the whole machinery of the Common Poor Fund had stood the test of time—they had their Receiver and their fund established, their audit, and all that was necessary. They would have to provide new machinery for the County Council in this matter, and as the Amendment proposed that it should be brought under the existing machinery of the Local Government Board it appeared to him the proposal of his hon. Friend was deserving of far more consideration than the President of the Local Government Board seemed prepared to give it.

MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, that by the proposal of the Government no function was given to the London County Council other than what was purely administrative. There was nothing here that could not be done simply by the work of a clerk. It was very simple and easy administrative work. Surely no one would say that if there had existed a Municipal Body in London at the time of the establishment of the Common Poor Fund that that Common Poor Fund would have been administered by the Local Government Board at all. So far was that the case that Members on the other side of the House as well as on this had recognised this. In proof of it he pointed to the fact that under the Act of 1888, passed by a Conservative Government, large duties were placed upon the County Council of a similar description in equalising the rate over London. They had to raise a rate over London amounting to about 4d. in the £1, and it was done entirely by the administrative work of the County Council, with which, he ventured to say, there had never been a single fault found. How could there be? They were merely carrying out an Act of Parliament exactly as the Common Poor Fund authority carried it out. There was no judgment to be exercised in either case. The fact was, there was less judgment and discrimination required to be exercised in the case of the London County Council here than in the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund, because in the latter case there were certain matters to be inquired into, such as whether the expenditure was rightly under this or that head; but under the Bill the London County Council would not have to exercise any judgment whatsoever in the matter. He really thought, therefore, it was wholly unnecessary to raise any discussion about the politics of the London County Council, and it did not come particularly well from a Member who had previously proposed an Amendment placing the most extreme discriminating powers in the hands of the London County Council under the Bill.

Mr. COHEN observed that no one would ever accuse him of being unduly partial to the London County Council, of which he had the honour of being a member, and he regretted that they were not at all to be acquitted of some of the charges of political bias which his hon. Friend had reproached them for. But here the power it was proposed to entrust them with had been described as a mere administrative act. He should rather call it a clerical act, a mere matter of clerkship, and he did not think the most redoubtable opponent of the London County Council had ever thought they would be guilty of any malversation of funds. He hoped, therefore, an unmerited reflection would not be passed upon the County Council, as there would be if this Amendment were pressed.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER thought that hon. Members could not have read the Bill when they said that the duties of the County Council would be merely administrative. The sub-section stated that the London County Council should half-yearly determine the contributions from each parish to one-half the Equalisation Fund and the grants due from one-half the fund to each parish. It was clear, therefore, that the duty was more than a purely administrative one. He thought when the question of rating had to be considered Londoners would have greater confidence in an apportionment by the Local Government Board, as in the case of the Common Poor Fund.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the point which had been made by the hon. Member for Shoreditch was that this was simply the duty of a clerk, and that they ought to reject the Amendment because this was simply a matter of calculation, that view also being taken by his hon. Friend near him (Mr. Cohen). That might be so, but there was one point he wished to put before the Committee. If they were to place this particular duty on the County Council and reject the interference of the Local Government Board on the ground that it could be performed by the clerk of the County Council they would not be prohibited by-and-bye—when they came to the question of control, raising more important points as to whether it should be exercised by the County Council or the Local Government Board—from moving Amendments. If it were understood that such was the case, he would advise that this Amendment should be withdrawn.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, it would, of course, be open to hon. Members to raise more important questions at a later stage.

Mr. BARTLEY: As that is so, I will ask leave to withdraw.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 6, to leave out the words "in every year," and insert the words "as hereinafter provided."—(*Mr. Alban Gibbs.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'in every year' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that the retention of these words would not preclude the hon. Member from raising important questions as to control hereafter. He did not think they were important one way or the other, but he could not accept the Amendment.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, it was important to know whether it was to be every year that the 6d. was to be raised? It was an absolute decision that 6d. was to be raised, but he hoped they should not be precluded from moving Amendments which would enable a certain sum to be carried over to another year. A fund was to be formed which should be equal to 6d. in the £1 every year. He desired to be informed how the fund was to be formed, and, also, whether the meaning was simply that a ledger account was to be opened? It seemed to him a strange piece of drafting to say that a fund was to be formed every year. He presumed the meaning was that the fund would be carried on.

Mr. KIMBER wished to give another reason for accepting the clause. Clearly enough, Sub-section 1 of the clause spoke of every year forming a fund. The second sub-section of the same clause went on to provide that the County Council should determine in each half-year not only the contributions to, but the distribution of, the fund. If the executive part of the operation was to be performed every half-year—that was to say, if they were to form the fund by contributions, and in the same half-year distribute that fund, why should they say that in every year that fund should be formed? Would it not be more simple to strike out the words "in every year," and leave it, as it was put in the second clause, as an operation each half-year? The clause would then, at all events, be consistent with itself, whilst at present it was most obscure.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that it was necessary to have a fund out of which sums would be paid to parishes entitled to receive them. The full sum of 6d. would not be paid yearly to every parish, but would be used for redressing the balance between the contributions and receipts of the different parishes.

Mr. KIMBER asked who was to determine how the 6d. was to be provided?

Mr. BARTLEY said, he could not see how the clause could be right. It said, "shall every year form a fund equal to a rate of 6d. in the £1." He took it that it would be absolutely necessary that the London County Council would have the collection of the fund, because otherwise it could not be provided. The London County Council would receive the fund obviously once a year and pay it out half-yearly.

Mr. GOSCHEN pointed out that the later sub-sections of the Bill were not in accordance with the sub-section they were now discussing. The language of the clause was extremely confused, and it was difficult to arrive at the meaning of the Government. The clause said that the London County Council "shall every year form a fund." But it would seem that they were not to form a fund at all; they were only to receive contributions from the richer parishes every year and pay them out to the poorer parishes every year. He saw an Amendment on the Paper in the name of his hon. Friend the Member for East St. Pancras suggesting that there should be a fund called "The Common Municipal Fund." That was the way the Bill ought to be drawn. Let there be a fund formed, and let there be a rate of contribution of 6d. in the £1 on the rateable value. But how a fund was to be formed "equal to a rate of 6d. in the £1," under the condition of the Bill, he could not understand. It was a question of drafting to some extent, but it was so extremely confused that it was difficult to arrive at the meaning of "fund" as used in the sub-section. He would, however, advise his hon. Friend not to press the Amendment any further.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID said that, according to the framing of the clause, a fund was to be formed every year. What really was intended was that a fund should be formed at once to which contributions should be made every year on certain principles. He would suggest that the words "every year" should be placed after the word "rate," so that the sub-section should read — the County

Council should form a fund and raise a sum "equal to a rate every year of 6d. in the £1." That would make the meaning of the section clearer than it was at present. It would provide for the making of a rate every year, and not for the forming of a fund every year.

MR. J. STUART held that such a change was unnecessary, the meaning of the sub-section being quite clear. It distinctly provided that there was to be no balance carried from one year to another; but that the fund was to be wound up every year.

*SIR A. ROLLIT suggested that instead of using the words "form a fund," it should be stated that an account should be opened to be called "the equalisation of rates account." That would be the commercial and legal way of dealing with the matter.

MR. W. LONG said, the hon. Member for Hoxton must have failed to read the latter portion of the Bill. The Bill provided for the distribution of the money. Therefore, there was no necessity for ear-marking the clause to prevent money being carried over every year——

MR. J. STUART: That is what I say.

MR. W. LONG expressed the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would favourably consider the suggestion of the hon. Baronet the Member for St. Pancras, which, he contended, would make the intention of the Government clear.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE promised to give the matter his consideration. The Amendment now under discussion was a mere drafting Amendment, and did not need this long Debate.

MR. BARTLEY said, he did not agree with the suggestion that there would be no money carried over from one year to another. In his opinion there must be a lot of money carried over. The Bill provided that a rate equal to 6d. in the £1 should be struck yearly and distributed half-yearly; and it was quite clear, therefore, that there would always be a half-year's rate in hand.

MR. GOSCHEN said, the difficulty of his hon. Friend the Member for North Islington, who had given such consideration to the Bill, to understand the Bill, showed how extremely obscure was the drafting. The intention was to form a fund equal to 6d. in the £1. But there would in reality be no rate of 6d. in the £1 at all. The idea was that there should be a rate of this amount which would be used to redress the balances in different parishes. But there was no rate of 6d. to be levied at all. It was a mere theoretical statement or abstraction. Before they finished the clause he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would state the times when he intended these rates were to be levied. He called attention to the fact that in Bills of this kind it was usual to give some details as to when the rate was to be levied, and that there was no provision in regard to that point in the Bill.

SIR J. GOLDSMID said, the object in view was to make the richer parishes contribute 6d. in the £1 on the rateable value for the relief of the poorer parishes. Therefore, the first thing to do was to open an account which should be called "The Equalisation Account," to which, from time to time, money would be paid, and then to distribute the money according to the clause. Three things were required to be done: First, to open the account; second, to raise the money; and third, to distribute the money. They could not do all that in every year. Therefore, they should not say "form a fund every year," to quote the words in the clause, but they should say "raise an account into which every year shall be paid 6d. in the £1." If the words in the clause were allowed to stand the fund, or the account, would be closed every year.

*COLONEL HUGHES said that, according to the clause, there was to be a fund formed every year; but the first year was only to be half a year—from September to March. The clause was very badly drawn, and needed a thorough revision.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he had already promised to consider the phraseology of the clause before the Report stage.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 6, to leave out the words "form a fund," and insert the words "open an account."—(*Sir J. Goldsmid.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'form a fund' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he should say that "form a fund" and "open an account" was practically the same thing; but he would consider the question before Report.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that "fund" and "account" were not at all alike. A person might have a fund to his credit; but an account might mean that he had no money at all.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID said, as the right hon. Gentleman had promised that he would carefully consider this point, he accepted the assurance, and would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. WEBSTER moved, in page 1, line 7, to leave out "Equalisation," in order to insert "Common Municipal." He thought it would be better to call the fund "The Common Municipal Fund," instead of "The Equalisation Fund," in order to clearly define its object. When the Common Poor Fund was formed, it was so called in the Act, and everyone knew its definite and distinct purpose.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) rose to Order. The hon. Gentleman had a somewhat similar Amendment down to line 5, which was discussed and withdrawn, and he wished to know whether the hon. Gentleman was in Order in raising the question again?

Mr. WEBSTER said, the Amendment referred to was not discussed; it was withdrawn, as it was not in proper form. He ventured to suggest that it would be better to describe the fund as "The Common Municipal Fund," because when Mr. Gathorne Hardy introduced his Bill to enable a common fund to be raised in London for the relief of the poor, the right hon. Gentleman called the fund "The Common Poor Fund," a name which definitely showed what the fund was intended for, and that was an example which they might very well follow in the present Bill. He thought a strong Committee of the House, or a strong expert Committee might be formed to allocate the proposed fund——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The only question raised by the Amendment is the name of the fund.

Mr. WEBSTER said, his reason for calling the fund "The Common Municipal Fund" was because it was intended for such purposes as lighting and sanitation. The one great danger he saw in calling the fund "The Equalisation Fund" was that as there was no supervision to secure that the fund should be spent for certain definite purposes——

The CHAIRMAN: I have pointed out that the hon. Member cannot go into that question. The only question is the name of the fund.

Mr. WEBSTER said, he would therefore move, for various reasons which he could not explain, that "The Common Municipal Fund" was a desirable name for the fund proposed in the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, to leave out the word "Equalisation," and insert the words "Common Municipal."—(*Mr. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Equalisation' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE thought "The Equalisation Fund" a good name, because it indicated the object for which the fund was intended. He could not, therefore, accept the Amendment.

Mr. W. LONG was sorry the right hon. Gentleman could not see his way to accept the Amendment, because it really raised a rather important point. At present they had got a common fund in London the application of which everyone could understand from its name—namely, the Common Poor Fund for the relief of the poor's rate of London. It was likely that other common funds would be established in London in the future, and it was really important that they should have distinct and definite names. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman adhered to the name "Equalisation Fund" in this case because it would be more popular. But it was admitted that equalisation of the rates would not be obtained in London by the Bill—he thought it would be almost impossible to obtain complete equalisation—and therefore the proposed name would be misleading. "The Common Municipal Fund" would be a proper description of the fund; and he was sorry the Minister in charge of the Bill could not accept that title.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID said, the Bill was intended to raise a fund from the rich parishes in order to reduce the amount paid by the poor parishes for sanitary and other purposes. He thought the name "Common Sanitary Fund" would best explain the object of the contribution; but as the word "sanitary" could not be used, they ought really to call the fund "The Common Municipal Fund." He said, as had been said many times, that the words "Equalisation Fund" might mislead many people. There were many things they could not equalise in the rating of the Metropolis. There were burdens in some parishes which might have been removed in others by longer existence or greater economy. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider before the Report whether it would not be well to adopt some such title as that proposed.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS said, the Common Poor Fund was also an Equalisation Fund, and therefore this should be described as Equalisation Fund No. 2.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he had intended to urge that point. He claimed that the Act of 1870 did much more towards equalisation than the present Bill. He therefore thought the right hon. Gentleman might soften his heart and alter a name which, if adopted, would throw into the shade former steps towards equalisation. It was rather important that the Metropolis should see that they had established a Metropolitan Fund for municipal purposes, as there had been established a fund for Poor Law purposes. It marked a new departure and would be more specific in its character than equalisation of rates.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, the main fund would be the old one, which would be 3s. 3d. in the £1. That was really an equalisation fund. The rate under the present Bill would only be 6d. in the £1. Surely it was hardly right when they had two funds, both of which served for equalisation (though one was much larger than the other) to give the smaller one and not the larger the name Equalisation."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he could not agree that the fund which would be established under the Bill would be the smaller one. It would be about equal to the Common Poor Law Fund established by the Acts of 1867 and 1870. There was a further equalisation in 1888, which was a distinct operation in the nature of a contribution from the Exchequer. He was ready to admit that the Common Poor Fund, established by the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his predecessors, was an Equalisation Fund; and he thought it was a pity that the right hon. Gentleman had not adopted the name.

Mr. WHITMORE suggested that the designation "Municipal Equalisation Fund" should be adopted.

***Mr. COHEN** thought the language of the Bill should not imply anything that was incorrect.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. WEBSTER proposed, in page 1, line 7, to leave out "of" and insert "not exceeding" before "sixpence." It might be said that the Amendment was not necessary, as the word "sixpence" was a definite statement of the exact amount which the ratepayers of the Metropolis would have to pay under the Bill. But he thought that the experience of the other Acts of a similar character showed that it was essential to insert "not exceeding" in order to secure that not more than 6d. was levied. When the late Mr. Forster brought in his Bill with regard to the School Boards of London, and when an Amendment was moved limiting the rate to a definite sum, the right hon. Gentleman said there was no necessity for it, and he assured the House that in all probability the rate would never be higher than 6d. in the £1. The danger was that as there was no controlling authority to investigate the expenditure, and as it was a general fund, people in all districts in London might ask for electric lighting and other luxuries; but if the words "not exceeding" were inserted in the clause, they would show that it was the intention of Parliament that the fund should not go beyond 6d. in the £1. They knew how Londoners resented the grave and great increase of rates in recent years. The rates in many parts of London were very excessive. In Chelsea they were 5s. 4d. in the £1, in Mile End New Town 6s. 6d., in Clerkenwell 5s. 10s., in Bermondsey 7s. 4d. He therefore moved the Amendment, not only on behalf of his constituents, but on behalf of London generally.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, to leave out the word "of," in order to insert the words "not exceeding."—(*Mr. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'of' stand part of the Clause."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the Government could not accept the Amendment. It was absolutely necessary for the purposes of the Bill that a fixed amount should be paid into the fund, and that that fixed amount should be 6d.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said, it would be more satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman gave the Committee evidence that 6d. in the £1 was the right amount at which to fix the contribution to the fund. There had been no inquiry by a Select Committee, or even by a Committee of the County Council into the merits of the case at all. What evidence was there that 6d. would be required? He could not see why the Amendment should not be accepted, and why the London County Council should be allowed to impose any amount they thought proper.

*MR. LOUGH said, the clause as it stood did not leave the amount to the discretion of the London County Council, but the Amendment, if adopted, would.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, that though not really a Metropolitan Member, he had done more work of this kind than most Metropolitan Members, because he had the honour of raising £1,500,000 annually in school rates in London. The effect of the Amendment would simply be that the County Council would have the power to levy a rate of something below 6d. if they thought fit. He could not see the necessity for a fixed amount being stated in the Bill. Let the County Council, in their discretion, fix the amount every year, provision being made that the amount should not exceed 6d. The burden of the rates in London was now intolerable, and the formation of this fund would, in his belief, lead to an increase in that burden. It was, therefore, he thought, open to them to endeavour to prevent the burden being increased.

*MR. LOUGH: I would point out to the hon. Gentleman that this Bill does not raise the rates all over the Metropolis in the slightest. It is a provision for equalising the rates that exist; and no additional rate is imposed at all.

SIR R. TEMPLE: I understand the Bill to say that a rate shall be levied equal to 6d. in the £1 throughout London.

MR. LOUGH: No, Sir; there is no such rate.

SIR R. TEMPLE: What is meant, then, by this rate of 6d. in the £1?

*MR. LOUGH: The rate is not to be levied. It is only a collection made over the Metropolitan area equal to a rate of 6d. in the £1, so that there may be a distribution of the money amongst all the parishes on the basis of population.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, the words of the clause were—"equal to a rate of 6d. in the £1 on the rateable value of London." They might try to charm those words away by a series of subtle considerations which he did not admit; but, in his opinion the Bill would, sooner or later, lead to an increase of the already heavy burden on the ratepayers of London. It might be said that the London County Council had been very economical in respect to the rates. He did not say anything against the Council in that respect. He thought they had not been so bad as other bodies for rating purposes which he could mention. But when there was a question of humanity concerned, whether in respect to the education or amusement, or the physical well-being of the people, all considerations of economy and just regard for the interests of the ratepayers seemed to disappear from the deliberations of the London County Council. Of course, if the money were well spent for those purposes, no one would grudge it; but he thought there were good reasons why the County Council should be limited to 6d. in the £1 in this matter.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said, he could not understand why the Amendment should not be accepted. He contended all that was wanted was the power to levy a rate up to 6d. in the £1, and that there was no reason for absolutely insisting that 6d. in the £1 should be raised. The acceptance of the Amendment would not deprive the County Council of any power which was given to them under the Bill. But it would make it possible for them, if circumstances permitted such a course, and it was consistent with the fulfilment of the sanitary requirements of London, to lessen the burden which would otherwise fall very heavily upon some of the parishes of London. Already the rates in London formed an exceedingly heavy burden, and he thought the Bill should not make it compulsory that this sum of exactly 6d. in the £1 should be levied. Under the Bill as it stood no reduction would be admissible. This was a measure that affected the interests of London only, and he thought that the Government should most certainly agree to the Amendment in order to meet the strongly-expressed wishes of the London Members.

*Colonel HUGHES (Woolwich) said, he thought the whole discussion had got into a tangle, and that there was a confusion of ideas in the minds of the previous speakers. The proposed rate of 6d. was to be levied on the whole of the Metropolis in order to form a fund from which to assist the poorer parishes, which was to be distributed according to population. In his own parish (Plumstead) they would have to pay this 6d. in the £1 to the general fund, but then they would receive 1s. 1d. in the £1 under the grant, so that in fact they would be the gainers of 7d. in the £1. The rate should certainly be fixed once and for all, and not be left to the discretion of whatever Party happened to be in power at the time. He should, therefore, certainly support the Bill.

*Sir J. GOLDSMID (St. Pancras, S.) said, he thought it would be undesirable that the Amendment should be accepted, as it would give to the London County Council the power to fix the amount of the rate, and that might make the question resolve itself later on into a Party one.

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that if it had been intended that the London County Council should have the power of deciding what rate was to be levied, he should have voted in the same way as his hon. and gallant Friend; but no discretion would really be left to the London County Council by the Amendment. His hon. Friend had said that as the number of constituencies that were to receive under the Bill were in the majority, they would vote down those who had to pay. However true that might be, he represented a constituency that was in the minority. But then it was a rich parish. What did it matter? they said. Yes, it was a rich parish, but for all that there were a great number of very poor people who lived in houses for which they had already to pay a far higher sum in the year by way of rates and taxes than their neighbours in Woolwich, for instance. The reason for this was that a man who required three small rooms in St. George's had to pay considerably more rent for them than his neighbour would in one of the poorer districts. It came to this—that under the Bill the poorer occupiers in wealthy parishes would be penalised. Under the new scheme the ratepayers would have to find an additional 4½d. in the £1, and therefore the contribution made by the poorer occupiers of St. George's and other rich parishes would be the highest in the Metropolis. If the fund was to have been paid away in accordance with the requirements of the parishes, and not in accordance with their population, then he would not have raised any protest to the full 6d. being annually levied; but as that was not the case he felt bound to support the Amendment, believing, as he did, that circumstances might arise that would make a smaller sum in certain years sufficient.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that in 1870 the late Mr. W. H. Smith used exactly the same argument when opposing a similar scheme then before the House, and that then the right hon. Gentleman opposite, in reply, seemed to have considered it as an argument of very small weight, because he not only did not mention it at all, but concluded his speech by saying that he had answered every argument of importance that Mr. W. H. Smith had brought against the scheme. He thought, therefore, that he could not on the present occasion do better than follow that example. One reason that the Government could not accept the Amendment was because it would give rise to so many other Amendments being proposed at a future stage of the Bill.

Mr. KIMBER said, there certainly appeared to be a confusion of mind prevailing among some hon. Members on this point, and pointed out that the rate of 6d. might be found to be too large. The principal argument in support of the Amendment was that the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill could not give the Committee with any certainty figures dealing with the point in question.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he concurred in the view that great confusion appeared to prevail in the minds of some hon. Members that the rate of 6d. was to be levied all over London. He would draw attention to the similarity of the present scheme with that brought forward by the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, in 1870, the amounts which the richer parishes would have to pay to the poorer parishes, and how precisely the burden fell on the same parishes. The charge of injustice, therefore, brought against the present scheme must also apply to the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman. The actual balance of the amount that would be paid under the Government scheme to the poorer parishes was £224,578, ending Lady Day, 1893; the amount paid by the richer parishes under the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman was £269,431. Under that scheme, as in this, the richer parishes which had to pay were the City, St. George's, Hanover Square, the Strand, Kensington, Westminster, Paddington, and Hampstead; and those parishes which were now paying £229,000 out of the £269,000 would pay £201,000 out of £224,000. Whether the inequality were unjust or not, it was precisely the inequality of burden created in 1870 and put on the same shoulders as proposed by this Bill.

MR. GOSCHEN protested that he and his hon. Friends had not fought the battle of the rich parishes that evening.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the Committee had listened to the complaints of the Representatives of richer parishes as to the burden put upon them by the Bill. Hampstead in its general rates would have an increased rating under this Bill of 1·47d. in the £1, Kensington 2·10d., Paddington 1·75d., St. George's, Hanover Square, 3·99d., St. James's, Westminster, 4·41d., St. Martin's-in-the-Fields 4·68d., and Marylebone 1·52d. The Government could not accept this Amendment, because its acceptance would be fatal to the Bill. When he was engaged in drawing the Bill he hesitated greatly in fixing the figure at 6d., and he thought that it ought to have been put at a higher figure. He deprecated the Debate falling into a squabble between the wealth and the poverty of one district or the other. [*A cry of* "It never has!"] He ventured to say that the Debate had been largely conducted on those lines. He found no Representatives of the rich parishes advocating this Bill. London, in his opinion, was an entity, where those artificial distinctions between parishes and parishes were unfair, unjust, illogical, and an anachronism. The wealth and the poverty of London were bound together, and why, therefore, should there be a different rule in London from that which prevailed in Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, or Manchester, where there was a common rate levied over the whole community for this set of purposes? In every great Municipality expenditure was raised over the whole community, and wealth was made to contribute to the needs of poverty. Wealth created poverty, and poverty created wealth; the one was bound up with the other, and in dealing with sanitary matters especially they could not isolate the rich and throw on the other portion of the community a heavy burden. He admitted that this was an imperfect scheme, in which it was possible for a keen logician like the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer to pick holes, as was the case when the late Mr. W. H. Smith picked the right hon. Gentleman's scheme of 1870 to pieces. But he maintained that, defects notwithstanding, it was a scheme which ought to be supported by Metropolitan Members. The Committee ought not to continue haggling about parishes here and there; let London be dealt with as a whole; let each district be thrown into a common fund, and let each obtain the advantages it could from that fund. While admitting that there were poor districts in St. George's, Hanover Square, he pointed out that the wealth of London was created in the City. Land there was of enormous value, and yet the City of London wanted to escape its fair contribution to the poverty of London, a policy which he described as a most unjust and unfair attempt at partial taxation. The

Amendments put down on behalf of the City of London showed a desire to evade the burden.

MR. BARTLEY: I rise to a point of Order, Mr. Mellor. Is this a question of "not exceeding"? It is a Second Reading speech.

THE CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has finished his speech.

MR. GOSCHEN: I should like to protest in the strongest possible manner against the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman that there has been up to this time any "haggling," or effort on the part of the wealthier portions of the Metropolis to defeat or maim this Bill. It is unworthy of the right hon. Gentleman. His heart is in the question. I quite admit that he is most anxious to do his best for the whole of London, but his statement that there has been any disposition on the part of the wealthier portions of the Metropolis to escape from their fair share of the rates is a most unjust, unfair, and uncandid aspersion upon the speeches that have been made on this side of the House. What has been our main contention? I hope that London will remember this point. Our main contention is that this Bill will be made the vehicle of better sanitation for London, and that the extra burdens that are to be imposed on the wealthier part of the Metropolis should not be frittered away, but that we should try and attain the object which I thought was the object of Her Majesty's Government, and which certainly is the object of the County Council—namely, that the money should be spent in improving the general health of the Metropolis. We have acknowledged this in every speech we have made. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman intended to include me amongst those who he says have been fighting on behalf of the wealthier parishes. Except a little speech I made just now on behalf not of the wealthy, but of the poor, I have not said a word which by any possibility could be so construed. I would also call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that Members whose constituencies were interested one way have boldly taken the other line, and have been endeavouring to make this the best Bill it can be made. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman should have imported into the Debate this attempt to make political capital out of the discussion. We have been endeavouring—and I challenge any impartial man to deny it—to look at this Bill from the point of view of how best the money can be spent. This is the first Amendment that has touched the question of the contribution at all, and the whole tone of our speeches has been in the direction of ascertaining what are the proper claims of the poorer portions of the Metropolis. We have shown that the money is improperly distributed under the Bill, but we have not done so from the point of view of richer parishes. The right hon. Gentleman must take the consequences if the speech he has delivered lengthens both my observations and the observations of any other speaker. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was present when I pointed out that some poor parishes would, under this Bill, receive perhaps 8d., whilst others would obtain perhaps only 4d. We say, as regards the poorer portions of the Metropolis, that there is no fair, or logical, or just distribution of the benefits that are given. This is a totally different matter from "haggling" on behalf of the richer parishes. The right hon. Gentleman has made an attack on the City. I leave it to those who represent the City to defend it, but I would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman thinks it is not right for the City to put forward the point that the City rates are practically almost the average rates of the Metropolis? My hon. Friend behind me says they are fully up to the average in certain parishes.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: 4s. 10d. against 5s. 3d.

MR. GOSCHEN: The 4s. 10d. is not admitted, and the right hon. Gentleman confessed that he has not got the precise figures. No one can tell the amount better than those who pay the rates. There are some who have actually paid in cash rates which are considerably higher than the 4s. 10d. of the right hon. Gentleman. To get his average he must show that there are a considerable number of parishes who have paid less than 4s. 10d., because we know that there are parishes which have paid much more. The City has argued that it will be treated unjustly if the population test is applied to it. The right hon. Gentleman asked why not have one rate all over London as you have all over Birmingham? Well, I want to know from the right hon. Gentleman or his friends are there different parts of Birmingham that can spend the money of the other parts without having any control exercised over them by such other parts? Is Birmingham so divided up in its government that paving, lighting, scavenging, and other expenses are distributed over different parts of the City, and that one part has to pay for another part without having any control over the expenditure of that other part?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that Birmingham is one Municipality, and that the whole of the expenditure is controlled by the Municipality.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Exactly; that is our point. We wish to have that control which the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues refuse to give us. The right hon. Gentleman being on the lookout apparently for political capital—though I may say I considered him worthy of better things—has missed our point, that if we can get the general control of the expenditure we are perfectly prepared to contribute to that expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman says, "See what Birmingham does. Why should not London do the same?" And what does he ask us to do? Something entirely different. He says that one sanitary district in London is to hand over money to another sanitary district without having any control over the expenditure. At all events, the right hon. Gentleman cannot say that there is any analogy to be found in any part of the Kingdom for such a proposal as that which is made by the present Bill. That is why we are examining it with so much care. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that as regards the sanitary rates of the Metropolis it is the duty of the richer portions of London to contribute towards the cost of the sanitation of the poorer portions. But I want to have some analogy to those municipal arrangements which he justly admired. If we are going to hand over a sum of money from one district to another we should be sure that it will be spent properly, and on the same principle as money is spent in other sanitary districts. It would be perfectly possible under the Bill for one sanitary district to undertake to pay wages to its *employés* at the rate of 26s. or 27s. a week, whilst the contributing parish paid only 20s. I believe there is a great deal of that kind of thing going on now, and that in some of the more highly rated districts higher wages were paid than in the more lowly rated districts. If we are to talk of London as a whole the voice of London as a whole ought to have some authority over the expenditure contributed by London as a whole. We shall endeavour to do our best to impress on the Government, regardless of any of the taunts of the right hon. Gentleman, that it is necessary where contributions are made to see that the control exists which he himself has almost boasted exists in other municipal parishes.

*Colonel HUGHES said, he wished to refer to a remark that had been made earlier in the Debate by the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square (Mr. Goschen) respecting the relative positions of the poor man in St. George's, Hanover Square, and the poor man at Plumstead. There were 7,000 odd houses in Plumstead, and the average rateable value was £17 per house. In St. George's, Hanover Square, there were 12,000 householders, and the average rateable value was £141 per house. There might be a few poor men amongst the 12,000, and some of them might have to live in heavily rated houses, but the same state of things must have prevailed when the Common Poor Fund was formed. The poor man in St. George's, Hanover Square, should be treated now in the same way as he was treated when the Common Poor Fund was established, and should be made to bear the burden of the rate according to his rateability.

Mr. MOULTON (Hackney, S.) said, he would not imitate the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, in the warmth of his speech, as he thought it would be much more profitable to deal with the arguments which the right hon. Gentleman had made especially his in the Debate. The right hon. Gentleman had advanced three arguments. In the first place, he had said that the rents even to the poor were high in St. George's, Hanover Square, and, therefore, although the rates might not be much in the £1, poor ratepayers had to pay a considerable sum. Then the right hon. Gentleman said the Bill would penalise the poor man in St. George's, Hanover Square, because his rates would be increased by it whilst the rates of the poor man in Bethnal Green would be diminished. Thirdly, the right hon. Gentleman had claimed that the Government should not go on with the Bill, because it was impossible to put the management of the whole of the fund into one hand as was done in Municipalities.

MR. GOSCHEN: I beg pardon; I did not say that we should not go on with the scheme. I said we ought to amend it.

*MR. MOULTON said, he would examine the right hon. Gentleman's arguments one by one. He quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that rents for the same accommodation might be higher in St. George's than they were in Bethnal Green, but no rent paid in London was measured simply by the cost of the house. The value of the position of the land to the person occupying the house was an element in the rent of every house in London. If a tradesman took a house in St. George's, Hanover Square, it was because the value of the place for trade purposes justified him in doing so. If a workman took a house in that parish it was because he wanted to be near his work. A tradesman or a workman would not pay more in St. George's, Hanover Square, than he would in Bethnal Green except in the hope of making the difference between the two rents out of the advantages of the position. A man would not pay more for a house in St. George's, Hanover Square, than it was worth to him any more than a man would in Bethnal Green, although the amount of the rent was no doubt in both cases very large. But the really important argument used by the right hon. Gentleman was the argument that the poor man in St. George's was going to be penalised because money was to be taken from St. George's and given to other parishes, and this would raise the rates to the poor in St. George's. No doubt it would, but it must be remembered that the poor in St. George's had their rates pulled down by the fact that the large houses in the parish paid an enormous amount in rates. The poor men had had their rates lowered by the fact that they were in community with the rich men. Therefore, when their rates were raised they were not unfairly raised in comparison with the rates of Bethnal Green because Bethnal Green contained no wealthy houses by which the rates were pulled down. If a separate district were constituted out of the poor parts of St. George's alone the sanitation rates in that district would be very much higher than was the present sanitation rate in St. George's. It was because the poor districts were in the midst of a wealthy parish that the rates were as low as they were, and if Parliament raised the rates all it would do would be to place the poor ratepayers in the position they would probably be in if they were in Bethnal Green, and had their rates lowered by the contribution of other London parishes. As to the question of the management of the expenditure of the new common fund, the House had to make up its mind on one thing—namely, whether it was going to take away local administration in sanitation. If local administration was to be retained the sum demanded by the nature and constitution of the district must be contributed as proposed by this Bill. It was necessary for Parliament to fix the scale of contribution from the big parishes to the small ones, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was right in saying that an Amendment which left it doubtful what the scale of relief would be must be fatal to the Bill. The only way in which local administration could be retained, and the system of contribution to the poorer parishes could be carried out, was by handing over a sum of money dependent upon their constitution, and letting them make the best of it. If they once made up their minds about that—and if doubtful about it let them now divide and decide it—then all the questions of common funds, when they had no common administration, were foreign to the Bill. They would make it a hopeless confusion instead of being what it was—a simple and clear [" Oh, oh ! "] attempt to make the wealthier parishes contribute to the additional expenses of the poorer parishes.

Mr. FISHER (Fulham) said, that the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down, having made a Second Reading speech as far from the Amendment as any speech he had ever heard, was now desirous of taking a Division. The hon. and learned Gentleman had commenced his speech by complaining of the warmth of the right hon. Gentleman who was so ably leading the Opposition in the Committee stage of the Bill, but that heat had been engendered by the Secretary of State for India, which was only to be accounted for by the right hon. Gentleman's change from the Local Government Board to an Office connected with an Oriental climate. No one was more surprised than he (Mr. Fisher) was at the right hon. Gentleman's change from the pacific temperament he had displayed when President of the Local Government Board. The matter before the Committee had been represented as a quarrel between those who would have to pay and those who would have to receive. Representing a constituency which had largely to receive, but did not wish to be debauched, he was strongly in favour of certain Amendments in the Bill which would enable some kind of control to be exercised over the gift which was being made to Fulham by those sanitary areas which were more fortunate than they were in that district. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had said they ought to accept any scheme, but as one who represented an area which was going to receive he was not in favour of accepting any scheme. He was strongly in favour of some central and common fund for sanitary purposes, but he had some little knowledge——

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I rise to Order. Is the hon. Member discussing the Amendment before the House?

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER: You did not object when the last speaker was addressing the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN said, it was desirable that the Committee should keep to the specific Amendment under discussion.

Mr. FISHER said, he could not help thinking that he was really the only person who had spoken to the Amendment. Although representing a constituency that was to receive he felt bound to express his view as to the process by which the gift should be bestowed. He did not want his constituency to be debauched; therefore, he thought there should be some control exercised over the expenditure. Now he came directly to the Amendment——

*Mr. LOUGH: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: Why did not the hon. Member for Islington interrupt his own side?

Mr. FISHER said, the Amendment was to the effect that the County Council should not necessarily be always obliged to put the rate as high as 6d., but that the words should be "not exceeding 6d. in the £1." It might be that the County Council, after some experience in this matter, might come to the conclusion that less than 6d. in the £1 would be necessary. If so, the County Council should have power to raise less. Otherwise some Local Authorities, by needlessly raising the salaries of their officials, might spend more on sanitation than was desirable. If this were done in one district it would necessarily have a bad effect in other districts. Whenever these subjects came before Local Authorities it was a common thing for them to compare their expenditure with that of their neighbours, and the force of example might induce many of them to spend more than was necessary on those objects to promote which the Bill was introduced. He was in favour of a greater discretionary power being placed in the hands of the London County Council.

Mr. BARTLEY said, that his object throughout these Debates had been to try to improve the Bill and make it fairer, so that certain districts should not be relieved at the expense of others which were poorer. He would like to point out to his hon. and gallant Friend that, although Plumstead and Eltham, two contiguous parishes, now paid exactly the same rates in the £1, the former was to receive under the Bill 7½d., and the latter less than a farthing relief. That was a startling case, which showed the need of some discrimination. He himself had put down Amendments to extend the power of discrimination, and, although he strongly supported a fairer and more equitable system of taxation for the different districts of London—and had always advocated it—he contended that unless this measure were amended in some such way as was proposed, by giving a discriminating power, it would inflict even greater hardship than existed at present.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, the right hon. Gentleman had told them that this Bill was going to do very much what the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund did —that was to say, that the rich parishes would contribute about as much as they did under that Fund. That was a perfectly true statement, taking the number of parishes together; but if they took the parishes singly, they were taxed in a very different manner. He would like to say a few words respecting the City of London. The City would not oppose any equitable arrangement. It had always desired to act not only with fairness, but with liberality, towards the rest of London. When the Common Poor Fund was instituted it was actually proposed by a Member for the City, the right hon. Member for St. George's, and the City supported the arrangement. Did or did not the City pay its fair share? The total population of the Metropolis was 4,230,000; that of the City was stated to be 37,500. Taking the poor rate, in the first place, the total expenditure was £2,728,000, of which the City paid £244,000. So that, while 37,000 persons paid £244,000, 4,200,000 only paid £2,500,000. Or if they looked at it in another way, the average rate per head for the whole country was 6s. 3d.; in London it was under 12s., while in the City it was over £6. In a population of 37,000 the number of lunatics would naturally be small, and the expense trifling, particularly in the case of such a population as that of the City; yet the City paid £71,000 towards the Metropolitan Asylums Board, the great bulk of which was in relief of the rates of the rest of the Metropolis. Taking the case of education, the total rate for the whole country was £3,300,000; that for London was £1,445,000, of which the City paid no less than £175,000. The average cost for a child, according to the Education Returns, was £2 8s. 4d., and the number of children of school age was one-sixth of the population.

Mr. LOUGH asked if it was relevant to go into these matters?

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Sir J. Goldsmid) ruled that the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly in Order.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, he would not detain the Committee more than a few minutes. He was dealing with the case of education. The City of London, with a population of 37,000 persons would contain 6,000 children, for whom the cost would be under £15,000. But the City contributed no less than £175,000, so that it paid far more than 10 times its proportionate cost. It must be admitted then, that as regarded the poor, the lunatics, and education, the City paid its full, and more than its full, share. The total amount raised in the Metropolis was £8,400,000, while that raised in the City alone was £1,000,000. In other words 4,200,000 persons contributed £7,400,000, while 37,000 persons contributed £1,000,000, or over £25 per head. And yet it was said that they did not contribute enough. Moreover, during the last five years the City had contributed no less than £900,000 for improvements in other parts of the Metropolis without receiving a farthing for improvements. Lastly, the City had constructed the Tower Bridge at a cost of £1,000,000 sterling without receiving any contribution from other parts of London. The population of the City as defined in the Bill might be taken at 300,000 during the day. For these sanitation, streets, and lighting had to be provided, and the streets must of course be lighted at night. Under these heads the City spent £170,000 a year, whereas for the rest of the Metropolis the cost was £1,500,000. Taking the respective valuations for the City and for the rest of the Metropolis, the proportion of expenditure under these heads was very much the same; and yet the City was now called upon to contribute a further £100,000 a year. His right hon. Friend in charge of the Bill stated the average rate for the City at 4s. 10½d. which was, no doubt, the figure given in the London County Council statistics. It was not, however, complete, as it did not comprise the ward rate or Militia rate. He believed that 5s. 2d. more closely approximated to the actual figures. Indeed, 5s. 2d. was the amount agreed to a year or two ago as the average rate for the purpose of the rating of the Gas Light and Coke Company; and since then the rates had certainly risen by more than 1d. The right hon. Gentleman had told the Committee that the average rate for the Metropolis was 5s. 5d., so that the City was really within 2d. of the average rate. There was also the question of the compound householder to be considered when making a comparison. One reason why the City appeared to be lightly rated was because in the City many amounts were paid by the Corporation out of City funds which elsewhere would come technically out of rates. For instance, the expense for bridges, which amounted to £39,000, and for the library and various other items, amounting to some £130,000 a year, were thus paid. If his right hon. Friend looked closely into the matter he would come to feel that the attack which had been made on the City was not justified by the circumstances. The City had no desire to evade some extra payment; but he submitted that no case had been made out why the City should be called on for a larger sum than £50,000 a year. They believed that the Bill would introduce additional complexity into the already intricate machinery existing in the Metropolis. He apologised to the Committee for having drawn attention to these matters, and he was obliged to them for the manner in which they had listened to him.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he hoped the Committee would now agree to come to a decision upon the Amendment, which they had been engaged in discussing for an hour and three-quarters. The Debate had certainly gone somewhat wide of the question before them. He would defer his reply to the remarks of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of London until a later occasion.

Sir A. BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.) said, he would like to say a word in reply to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India. He represented Kensington, which was a rich, well-conducted, and well-administered parish, and they wanted to know where the money was going to and who was to have control of it. It was far from their wish to evade any obligation whatever; on the contrary, he could say that Kensington had voluntarily done a great deal of good in the Metropolis. The mother church of that district had voluntarily annexed an East End parish. He was sure, also, that St. George's and the other great and rich Metropolitan parishes were quite willing to bear their proper burdens, their cry on this particular point being, where was the money going to and who was to administer it. Under the Common Poor Fund they knew where the money went and how it was administered. They were perfectly willing to pay a rate of 6d., or even more for the benefit of their poorer neighbours, but they protested against the notion of being taxed without having any control over the money.

Sir R. TEMPLE said, he desired to say a word in explanation. His interpretation of the Bill had been questioned, and in reference to that he desired to quote a sentence from the Report of the Vestry Clerk of the parish of Kensington, who wrote—

"This Bill seeks to empower the London County Council——"

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That certainly is going beyond the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 108; Noes 35.—(Division List, No. 209.)

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER moved, in page 1, line 7, after "rate of," insert "three pence."

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot move that. He must move to omit the word "sixpence," if he wants to insert another figure.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER said, he would bow to the Chairman's ruling, and would move the Amendment in the form he suggested. He had listened with very great surprise to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India. The Debate had been conducted with great calmness; but the right hon. Gentleman had risen and attacked hon. Members of the Opposition, and had said that their sole wish was to do their best to protect the wealthier classes of London. That was very far from their intention. He was moving this Amendment in the interest of a constituency, which he thought could not be described as a wealthy constituency, for it contained a vast number of poor people. He understood the President of the Local Government Board to say that the sanitary rate in London, or the amount that ought to be spent for purely sanitary purposes, ought not to be more than 3d. in the £1.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I said under the Public Health Act.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER said, he accepted the correction, but at the same time he would point out that the Public Health Act had a very wide scope, and that outside of it there was very little sanitary work that could be done in the Metropolis. There had been special pleading by hon. Gentlemen opposite regarding the fact that those hon. Members who were trying to limit the expenditure under the Bill were simply acting and speaking in the interests of the wealthier population. The hon. Member for Hackney's speech was purely special pleading, but he would point out for the hon. Gentleman's information and for the information of other hon. Members that a poor parish like Wapping would have to contribute no less than 4¾d. in the £1 to this common fund, while St. Paul's, Covent Garden, also a parish containing a very poor district, would have to give 5d., St. Martin's-in-the-Fields 4d., and St. Clement's Danes also 4d. Hon. Members who had addressed, and who might address, the House, would no doubt ask why should not there be a common fund for London as in such places as Wolverhampton and Bradford. In Bradford the people had a common fund allocated for all purposes. This was not at all the same case. There was no compounding system. Bradford was rated in precisely the same way all through, and an assessment committee existed by which the assessments were carried out on identically the same lines.

The CHAIRMAN: The Amendment which the hon. Member is moving is to omit 6d. in order to insert 3d. He must address his argument to the point whether the Committee should accept the larger or the smaller sum.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER desired to point out that the Public Health Act had a very wide scope, and that 3d. would be adequate to meet the requirements of the case, that was to say expenditure for sanitary purposes, that sum being collected from all the parishes in London. He begged to move, therefore, that the sum fixed be 3d. in the £1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, leave out "sixpence," and insert "threepence."—(*Mr. R. G. Webster.*)

Question proposed, "That 'sixpence' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that in the discussion which had previously taken place this matter had been fully considered, and that the last Amendment virtually disposed of this question. He could only say on the part of the Government that they regarded 6d. as the minimum sum for the purposes in view. A rate of 3d. would hardly be worth having at all, and the Government would not have thought worth while to propose it. As regarded the reference to the Public Health Act, he would only say that the cost of carrying it out was 3d. A rate of 1d. in the £1 for Hanover Square would mean an 8d. rate for Bethnal Green, where the cost of carrying out the Public Health Act would be much more serious. A much smaller amount would be required for the parishes in the centre of London. He could only repeat that 6d. was the minimum sum which could be considered at all adequate.

Sir R. TEMPLE desired to say only one word in support of the Amendment. Quoting from a Report with reference to Kensington, he pointed out that after the creation of this fund a sum of £18,000, or in other words 2s. 3d. in the £1, would at once be added to the rates of the parish, with a further increase in future. As an illustration of what the result would be he thought that was a very good ground for supporting the Amendment.

Mr. WHITMORE said, that he could not support the Amendment, but he should like to take this opportunity of asking the President of the Local Government Board for specific information as to how far the 6d. rate ought to be expended on sanitary purposes. Surely it was only right that London Members should receive an answer to that question.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the question would arise under Section 4.

Mr. WHITMORE had only asked for the information upon the question whether 3d. should be substituted for 6d., and how far the latter sum, if retained, would be required for purely sanitary purposes.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that the average contribution would not be much more than 3d., and that would not go very far towards covering the sanitary expenses. Some parishes would increase their expenditure on sanitary work, while in others the sum might merely be applied to relieve the rates. No general rule could be laid down. Besides the expenditure under the Public Health Act there was a great deal of expenditure which was virtually though not technically for sanitation, as, for instance, cleansing cesspools and scavenging roads. The hon. Gentleman might rest assured that the very moderate contribution in the poorer parishes would be expended for purposes coming within the term sanitation.

Mr. W. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) hoped the Amendment would not be pressed, as he should be sorry to see the rate reduced to 3d. But the President of the Local Government Board was utterly inconsistent. He now said that there was a great deal of actual sanitary expenditure which was not legally so called. Earlier in the discussion, when hon. Members were urging that this rate should be devoted exclusively to sanitation, the right hon. Gentleman said that if such a limitation were imposed it would be impossible to provide for the disposal of the money by some of the Local Authorities. The right hon. Gentleman's two statements were not consistent.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I was speaking of sanitary expenditure as expenditure under the Public Health Act.

Mr. W. LONG said, that there had been no desire to make the limitation so narrow. The objection was to money being taken out of other people's pockets for road-making and lighting which were not subjects coming properly within the purposes of the fund. The right hon. Gentleman had said unless those two objects were included it would be impossible to distribute the money among the Local Authorities, whereas he now stated that a good deal of sanitary work was done which did not come under that legal and technical description. He agreed with his hon. Friend, however, that if they were going to pass a Bill dealing with the rates of London the Committee might just as well be "hung for a sheep as a lamb" and make the amount 6d. at once.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER, after the observations which had been made, asked permission to withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. BARTLEY said, their only object was to see that the amount, whatever it was, should be properly expended. For his own part he thought 6d. was not enough, and provided the Bill secured more careful arrangement he would not object to a larger sum.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the objection on the part of Representatives of rich parishes was to the want of elasticity in the Bill. They would not, however, divide the House on the question of a diminution from 6d. to 3d.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. KIMBER moved an Amendment exempting from contribution parishes where the rates were above the average. In Wandsworth the rates for the past 12 months were 6s. 6d., though it was true it was a receiving parish by the small amount of 2d. In the City again the rates were 6s. 4d., which probably excluded one or two exceptional items which would not ordinarily be called rates. He did not, however, wish it to be supposed that he was actuated by any such pitiable consideration as whether his own and his fellow-parishioners' rates would be reduced or raised 2d. or 3d. He was sure that nothing that had passed in the course of the Debate would justify the right hon. Gentleman in attributing to them any meaner motives than those for which they had always claimed credit. The President of the Local Government Board had stated that it was, at all events, the intention of the Government that no parish whose rates were among the highest—that was to say, above the average of 5s. 6d.—should be called upon to contribute.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the statement he had made was that the Government believed the effect would be that parishes above the average would not be called upon.

Mr. KIMBER said, the proviso he wished to insert would secure that the Bill should have that effect. Its aim was to protect a parish which, for instance, was paying 7s. 4d., against being called upon to contribute. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would admit that

that was fair. He knew that it had been suggested that one effect of this proposal would be that, when a parish found itself in a position which compelled it to contribute to the fund, in order to escape so doing it would at once go in for making its own expenditure excessive. He did not believe that in practice that would be found to be so. The average rate of the whole of the Metropolis was 5s. 6d. in the £1, and he asked whether any parish would attempt to increase their expenditure so as to exceed that figure by 1s. or 1s. 6d. in order merely to escape from the payment of the additional 6d. required as a contribution to this fund?

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, at end, insert—

"Provided always that—(a) No parish whose total rate in the £1 for the previous year is above the average total rate in the £1 of all London shall contribute to the said fund; (b) no parish whose total rate in the £1 for the previous year is below the average total rate in the £1 for all London shall receive any grant from the said fund."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that at first sight the Amendment no doubt seemed plausible enough, but on closer examination it would be found that, although there was a good deal that could be said in its favour, still it would lead to extravagance and unnecessary expenditure, and on that account the Government could not agree to it. He would point out that a parish, on the one hand, whose rates were below the average would feel itself bound to expend the money in its own area, which it would otherwise have to contribute to the fund, and, on the other hand, a parish might increase its expenditure in order to raise its expenses to such an amount as would enable it to claim a contribution. Take Kensington as an illustration of what would happen. The average rates in that parish for the last three years were 5s. Under this Bill it would be called upon to pay 3d. in the £1, in aid of the poorer parishes, which would bring them up to 5s. 3d. The contribution which the parish would pay would amount to £18,000 a year. If it increased its expenditure within the parish by that sum, it would be free from contribution to the fund. Could any plan be proposed which would hold out greater inducement to extravagance in the parish? The same objection applied in the other direction to the second part of the Amendment. If the proposal was one, as had been urged, that should be accepted on the ground of common fairness, why was it not inserted in the Bill of 1870? He also objected to the Amendment because it would give rise to a feeling of uncertainty in all those cases where the amount of the rates fell a little below the limit fixed. That would open the door to all kinds of gerrymandering. From every point of view, therefore, he considered that it would be most unwise for the Government to accept the Amendment.

*COLONEL **HUGHES** said, this Amendment was not necessitated by the present position of London in these matters. A parish might give an extra 5 per cent. for compounding on a great number of houses, and thus raise the rate. It would be rather hard to deprive poorer parishes of the benefits that they hoped to get, because the system of compounding had increased the rates in the contributing parishes.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that the right hon. Gentleman had appealed to him with regard to the Amendment, and had referred to the Act of 1870, in which he said there was nothing of this kind. Of course there was nothing of the kind in that Statute, because the whole arrangement was different. There they had some distinct test of wealth or pauperism, and there was none of that uncertainty which attached to this Bill. Everyone was able to calculate what the proportion would be according to the rate of pauperism. Whenever the right hon. Gentleman alluded to the Act of 1870 he (Mr. Goschen) could not help thinking how much better a measure it was than this, and how its provisions secured the Metropolis against the dangers they saw in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had argued in regard to one or two parishes which stood precisely on the border line, and in all cases where they drew a particular line it was certain that there would be cases either above or below that line where possibly operations might be taken which would defeat the intentions of Parliament. But they must be very near the line to make it worth their while. If they were a little below it would be a strong order to increase their rates so that they might come under this Bill. He admitted there were one or two parishes where that might be the case, and although he doubted whether that was a practical argument for the right hon. Gentleman to use against it, still he admitted there was some force in it, and he should be reluctant to encourage any provisions which would hold out any inducement to a parish to increase the rates. Still, while he saw difficulties in adopting the Amendment, he also perceived some advantages that would attend it. The proposal of his hon. Friend was right, just, and equitable in theory; but under all the circumstances he thought his hon. Friend would act wisely in withdrawing the Amendment. At the same time, he was bound to say he thought the right hon. Gentleman ought, in justice, to admit the proposition that no parish whose rate was above the average rate of all London ought to be called on to contribute to the fund.

MR. ALBAN GIBBS desired to point out to the President of the Local Government Board that it would be a very dangerous thing for a parish to try to increase their rates in order to get above the average. The average might go up at the same time, and the parish would then find itself in a very awkward position. He was very sorry to hear the Amendment was to be withdrawn, as he should very much have liked to support it.

*MR. LOUGH desired to point out that the relief which had to be paid to any parish depended not upon whether the rate was higher but whether the poverty was greater. The test of whether a parish should pay was its richness, and the test of whether a parish should receive was its poverty. It might happen that a rich parish had got a high rate, and had got some advantages from its high rate, but because it was wealthy it would have to contribute something to a poor parish. If hon. Members would recollect that simple test all difficulties would disappear. The hon. Member for North Islington took two parishes, and he told them that Plumstead had to receive a large amount while Eltham had to pay.

MR. BARTLEY: It receives something less than ¼d.

*MR. LOUGH said, the argument was that one parish received about 7d. whilst the other received only ¼d. He wanted the hon. Member to learn why this was so. The two parishes were not treated alike, although they lay beside one another, but because Plumstead was very poor, and had an average valuation per head of the population of only £3 2s., it received 7d. in the £1, whilst Eltham, which was rich, and had an average valuation per head of £9 2s., it only received one farthing. If hon. Members opposite would recognise this principle they would find the Bill was not uncertain in its operation, but extremely certain, and worked with marvellous accuracy all through the Metropolitan area. The point at which the line was drawn was an average value of £7 18s. per head of the population. With a single exception all under that amount received and all above that amount paid. It did not matter what the rates were. A parish would have to pay because it was rich. It might be extravagant and have high rates, but it would have to pay; and there might, again, be a very poor parish which was very economical, and it should not be deprived of its fair share of benefit because it had managed its affairs economically. Take the case of St. Olave's, Southwark. It was said that 6s. 4d. was a high rate, and it was asked why St. Olave's should have to pay a little more. If hon. Gentlemen would look at the average valuation of St. Olave's they would find it was £50 per head of the population, so that it was quite just this parish should make a little contribution. Take a case like Islington, whose average rate might happen to be under the average of the rates in the Metropolis. They had had an illustration given of how that might be brought about. Islington had only 2d. to pay for a certain class of loans, whilst an adjoining parish had 1s. 4d. to pay for the same kind of loans. If they adopted the principle of this Amendment they would not study economy, but would put a premium upon extravagance. He was quite certain if his hon. Friend who had moved the Amendment would recognise the principle upon which the Bill was based—namely, the richness on the one hand, and the poverty on the other, both of which were arrived at the same way, he would see that his proposal was not one which it would be wise to press to a Division.

MR. KIMBER desired to be allowed to answer the observations made from the opposite Benches. First of all, there was no argument as to extravagance which could be adduced against this clause which was not equally good against any principle of doles, however that principle might be applied. The fact that all the parishes of London would be in a state of expectancy, through their representative bodies, of getting a dole at the expense of a common fund would lead them *pro tanto* to a kind of—he would not say extravagance, because he should not like to charge the constituencies of London with wilful extravagance, but it would tend to induce a spirit of self-liberality towards their districts that would certainly lead to a larger expenditure by them than would otherwise be the case. Another answer to the plea of extravagance was the control that must be exercised in any case where they had any expenditure over a large area. In the case of the Common Poor Fund they had the supervision of the Local Government Board, and some tribunal or machinery must be, in subsequent parts of this Bill, erected for the purpose of controlling the expenditure of this fund, however it might be distributed. The question of whether any parish had made its rates too high, so that it might become a recipient of this fund, should be made the subject of criticism by some body responsible for it, and there was no body so competent, having regard to its very efficient staff, as the Local Government Board. The expectation of the distribution out of a fund which was to be applied to all London was not sufficient to justify the supposition the right hon. Gentleman applied to places like Kingston, that they would wilfully, maliciously, and extravagantly incur an expenditure of an extra £18,000 in their own parish, beyond what was reasonably and properly necessary to be expended, simply for the sake of saving themselves from a possible contribution towards a common fund for the sanitary improvement of the Metropolis. He did not believe that of Kingston, nor of the right hon. Gentleman's own parish, wherever that was. He did not believe there was in London a Municipal Body so corrupt as to do such a dirty transaction. The next reason urged against the Amendment was the uncertainty. He could not quite understand where the uncertainty was. There was no uncertainty in ascertaining the amount, because the right hon. Gentleman had already ascertained what were the maximum and minimum rates of London for last year, and he could therefore strike an average. The hon. Member for Woolwich said that the rates in his parish were increased by the system of compounding. The fact that there was compounding did not affect the Amendment, and, again, he would point out that the test of this Bill was not the wealth or poverty of a parish, but its population. He would not put the Committee to the trouble of a Division, but, as he should like to have this Amendment put on record, he would submit to its being negatived.

Question put, and negatived.

MR. BARTLEY moved, in page 1, line 11, leave out "parish," and insert "sanitary district." He said, the section provided that the London County Council should half-yearly determine the contributions from each parish in London to one-half of the Equalisation Fund. It seemed to him that, looking at the whole scope of the Bill, this did not affect the larger districts; but he thought the adoption of his proposal would work in some smaller parishes, where the discrepancies were greater than anywhere else, with greater fairness. The sanitary district was the district which was recognised in a great many ways, and the adoption of the Amendment would enable the scheme to work in a better and more systematic manner.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 11, to leave out the word "parish," and insert the words "sanitary district."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'parish' stand part of the Clause."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he must decline to accept the Amendment, the word "parish" having been selected with the distinct object that poor parishes might obtain relief.

MR. GOSCHEN remarked, that he did not want to deprive the poor parishes of the advantages they might obtain under the Bill, but there was a considerable anomaly in the idea of grants being made to the sanitary districts whilst the contributions were levied from the parishes.

The *onus probandi* lay on the right hon. Gentleman to show that that was correct. Where there was a district which was composed of several parishes the poorer parishes relieved the wealthier parishes in the same sanitary district from any contribution towards the fund. Where there was a group of parishes in a sanitary district there were in that group certain parishes that would otherwise contribute, and which were now free, because of their connection with the poorer parishes, from any contributions such as were made by other wealthier parishes. That was the case in Plumstead, Woolwich, and several other of these aggregated parishes. He thought they ought to enact that contributions should come from the sanitary district, and the grant be made to the sanitary district, and the rectification of any injustice as regarded the contribution or the grant should be made in the subsections relating to the aggregated districts.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he had no reason to complain of the criticism of the right hon. Gentleman who had accurately described the intention of the Bill. This was a very complicated matter, and not at all easy to understand. The best way to understand it was to look at the Return which had been presented to the House showing how the distribution was made among the parishes which formed the sanitary districts. If hon. Members examined the Return they would then see that the object of distributing the money among the parishes that formed the sanitary districts was to carry out the principle of equalisation as far as possible within the sanitary districts, so that the poorer parishes should benefit in proportion to their population.

*Colonel HUGHES said, difficulty and unfairness would certainly arise if one system was adopted for collection and another for distribution—if the money were contributed by the parishes and distributed by the sanitary districts. The parishes grouped together in the sanitary district would not each get its fair amount of relief under the Bill if the mode of distributing the money by sanitary districts was adhered to. For instance, Plumstead if taken separately would have a rate in aid of over 7d., but if it had been grouped with the other parishes in the old sanitary district it would only have had 4d. Cases of that kind would be found all over London.

Mr. J. STUART contended on the question of distribution that as the fund was to be raised for purposes, the expenses of which fell on the sanitary district as a whole, it was extremely reasonable that the money in aid should be given to the sanitary district as a whole. With regard to the question of collection, the precept of the County Council for the collection of the money must be issued to the Guardians of the parishes. There was no precedent for issuing a precept to a Sanitary Authority, and that fact constituted a practical objection to the Amendment.

*Mr. LOUGH said, it would be found on examination that in the distribution of the money to the sanitary districts the Bill would work with justice towards each separate parish grouped in every sanitary district.

Lord G. HAMILTON believed that on the contrary under the clause as it stood the principle that the poorer parishes should be assisted by the richer parishes in sanitary arrangements would not be carried out. The object of the Bill was to effect sanitary improvements throughout the Metropolis. But what would be the inevitable result of providing that when the valuation of a parish reached the point of £7 18s. per head of its population such a parish contributed to, and did not receive any assistance from, the fund? The result would be that the Local Authorities would try to keep their valuation down and send the population up. As parishes would have to contribute when their population went down and their valuation up, and as such a state of things occurred when vigilance was exercised by Sanitary Authorities, when, for instance, slums were removed, he was afraid that the Bill would encourage relaxation in sanitary matters. He thought that was a criticism worthy of the attention of the Government. He was bound to say, however, that he could not himself suggest a principle of distribution which was not open to objection. But he ventured to suggest that if the object of the Bill was—as he believed it was—that the poorer parishes should be assisted by the richer parishes for the purpose of improving their sanitary arrangements, the principle of distribution adopted in the Bill would make in an opposite direction.

MR. GOSCHEN urged that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board should look carefully into the words of the clause and see whether they could not be made clearer than they were. The hon. Member for Hoxton had pointed out that the County Council levied the rates on the parish and not on the sanitary district; and he therefore, very naturally and perfectly fairly, objected to anything which would involve the levying of the rate on the sanitary district. But there was no question in the sub-section of levying a rate at all. The question was simply to determine what area should contribute.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: It is a very complex question.

MR. GOSCHEN said, it was a complex question; and therefore he thought he was justified in urging on the right hon. Gentleman that he should consider before Report whether this part of the Bill could not be put into a clearer shape. It could be provided, he thought, that the area would be the sanitary district, and, at the same time, that the contribution would be made by each separate parish in the sanitary district in the shape of a rate.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the question had given rise to a great deal of difficulty to the Local Government Board, and the words were adopted by the Local Government Board after careful consideration. He would undertake, however, to again reconsider the matter before the next stage, owing to the very able discussion that had taken place; but he could not pledge himself that his decision would be favourable to the Amendment.

MR. BARTLEY said, after that statement, with which he was satisfied, he should not press his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. WHITMORE moved, on behalf of Mr. BOUSFIELD, to leave out from "fund," in line 12, to "by," in line 14. This Amendment was necessary to carry out the object of another Amendment which his hon. and learned Friend had lower down on the Paper, and which would substitute a new principle and a new machinery for the principle and machinery in the Bill. That further Amendment was as follows:—

Clause 1, page 1, line 17, leave out from the beginning to "where," in line 22, and insert—

"The grant due from that one-half of the fund to each parish shall be determined by three arbitrators to be appointed by the Local Government Board, who shall apportion the amount of half the Equalisation Fund among the sanitary districts.

In making such apportionment the arbitrators shall have regard to the following considerations:—

(a) the population of each district;

(b) the rate in the pound required in each district in order to provide the amount expended in each district for the purposes hereinafter mentioned;

(c) such other matters as are in the opinion of the arbitrators necessary to be considered in order to enable them to carry out the object of this Act.

Where a sanitary district comprises two or more parishes the arbitrators shall divide the grant due among those parishes, and in making such division shall have regard to the same considerations as are mentioned in the preceding sub-section with reference to apportionment.

Provided nevertheless that."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, to leave out from the word "fund," to the word "by," in line 14.—(*Mr. Bousfield.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, it could hardly have been supposed that the Government would consent to such an Amendment. It was intended to provide that the apportionment of the fund should not be on the principle of population, but should be decided by three arbitrators, as they thought best. He did not think that in the whole course of legislation such a question had been left to the decision of arbitrators. Those arbitrators, who, of course, would have to be paid enormous salaries, would have to decide how this fund of £800,000, raised by a rate of 6d. in the £1 on the valuation of London, should be distributed. They might adopt any principle they thought fit in the distribution of the fund; they would not be responsible to Parliament or to public opinion in any way, and there would be no opportunity, by appeal, for revising their decisions. That was a proposition which the Government could not accept.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he was surprised to note that the right hon. Gentleman objected to three arbitrators being appointed to decide those very important matters. No doubt his learned Friend considered that he was paying a compliment to the initiative and example of the Government in suggesting three arbitrators; but as he was not enamoured of three arbitrators in the Bill, any more than in the other Bill of the Government, he would advise the withdrawal of the Amendment.

Mr. BARTLEY said, the Committee had not yet arrived at the very important part of the Bill—namely, the mode of the distribution of the fund—whether it was to be according to population, or by some other system. They were all agreed that an equalisation of the rates was wanted; but where the two sides of the House were in disagreement was as to the basis of distribution. The Amendment suggested that there should be some body appointed to settle the various points in connection with the question, but he thought the proposal of arbitrators was clumsy, and hoped it would not be pressed. He trusted, however, that when they came to consider the great question of population, the critics of the Bill would have more of the sympathy of the President of the Local Government Board.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BARTLEY moved, in page 1, line 14, after "shall," insert "half-yearly." The object of the Amendment was to provide that the County Council should half-yearly determine the contributions from the parishes to the equalisation fund. He thought that was the intention of the President of the Local Government Board, but the matter would not be quite clear unless "half-yearly" were inserted where he suggested.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, after the word "shall," to insert the words "half-yearly."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-yearly' be there inserted."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the principle was already established in the Bill that the contribution of the amount should be settled half-yearly.

Mr. GOSCHEN asked the President of the Local Government Board upon what dates the contributions would be levied and distributed? It would be convenient to the Local Authorities to have information on those points.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE replied that Sub-section 2 of Clause 3 of the Bill provided that the Act should come into operation on the 30th of September this year, and that the rate would be paid half-yearly from that date. It was presumed, therefore, that the calculation would be made within the six months.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I know it is to be done in the six months, but is the County Council to fix particular times when the rate is to be levied?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I will answer that on Monday.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL.
(No. 246.)

CONSIDERATION.

Further Proceeding on Consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee).

Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester): I object.

The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS (Mr. H. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) appealed to the hon. and gallant Member not to press his objection, on the ground that there was a general agreement on both sides of the House that the Bill should become law as soon as possible.

Mr. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley) also appealed to the hon. and gallant Member not to press his objection.

Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND: I object.

Mr. H. GLADSTONE said, the Bill was not contentious, and was supported by all sides of the House.

Mr. HOWELL said, it was a Bill looked forward to with great anxiety by people out of doors. It had been well considered by a Committee upstairs, and had now reached the final stage. He hoped that in the interest of the public and the Building Societies the House would allow the Bill to be considered.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that if the case were as the hon. Member stated it would be an easy thing for the Government to find a quarter of an hour at an earlier period of the evening for making progress with the measure.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND: It may shorten the discussion if I say that I have no intention whatever of withdrawing my objection.

Further Proceeding deferred till Monday next.

CROWN LANDS (*re-committed*) BILL. (No. 4.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): Might we have an explanation of this Bill?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): It has been before the House several months. It has been considered by a Select Committee, and has now come here unopposed. There was opposition in the early stages, but the points raised have all been agreed to. The objectionable portion of Clause 5 has been withdrawn, and hon. Members opposite who are interested in the New Forest recognise that the Bill is satisfactory.

MR. BARTLEY said, there was an Amendment on the Paper to Clause 5 which did not bear out the right hon. Gentleman's statement. The clause seemed to be contentious.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Not at all. It is a clause carrying out the recommendations of the Select Committee of 1890.

Clauses 1 to 4 agreed to.

Clause 5.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) moved to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir F. S. Powell.*)

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The Amendment to this clause has been withdrawn.

MR. BARTLEY: It was moved, and now it is withdrawn. That is not as it should have been.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The Amendment was never put from the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: It was withdrawn before it was put from the Chair.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 11 agreed to.

Clause 12.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked if the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would make a statement as to this clause. Will the right hon. Gentleman consider whether the clause is sufficient to deal with the question of the sale of reversions by the Crown under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act? A release has been made in one instance to a private proprietor, which approaches the proportions of a regretable incident.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, this was an improvement in the present law. The proposal was to give power to the learned Judges to deal with quit-rents. It was in the interest of the purchasers of property that these facilities should be given. The clause had been fully considered.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he did not raise objection, but he ventured to say that the interests of common lands in Ireland were worse looked after than in any part of the Empire, the result being that the landlords got all the benefit.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment (Queen's *Consent* signified); read the third time, and passed.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (*re-committed*) BILL.—(No. 321.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

MR. BARTLEY said, he objected. They had been sitting since 3 o'clock in close attention on a Bill, and it was time they went home to bed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) appealed to the hon. Member to withdraw his objection, as the Bill was only a consolidation Bill, and that it was very desirable that it should pass without delay. The Bill was founded on a well-settled principle, to enable important reforms to be made in the Merchant Shipping Law.

Mr. BARTLEY: I object.

Mr. BRYCE said, it was customary to allow Bills of this kind to pass without opposition. They were always taken after midnight. If the hon. Member carried his mind back to the last Parliament, he would find that when his friends were on the Ministerial side of the House these consolidation Bills were taken after 12 o'clock.

Mr. BARTLEY: They were always objected to.

Mr. BRYCE: They were always supported by the Opposition and allowed to pass. I venture to appeal particularly in regard to this Bill, because until it passes we cannot undertake some much-needed reforms.

Mr. BARTLEY rose to Order, and asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to make a speech after objection had been taken?

***Mr. SPEAKER** said, he understood that the right hon. Gentleman was merely trying to persuade the hon. Member to withdraw his objection. Of course, if the hon. Member persisted in his objection, nothing further could be done.

Mr. BARTLEY said, that he must maintain his objection.

Committee deferred till Monday next.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.

(No. 336.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH wished to know when this Bill would be circulated, and whether it enacted any important alteration in the law? Bills like this should not be allowed to stand on the Paper for some time without giving information to the public as to what they meant.

The SECRETARY to the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. Foster, Derby, Ilkeston) said, the Bill was only introduced a few days ago, and had not yet been printed. He hoped it would be in the hands of hon. Members by Monday morning.

Second Reading deferred till Tuesday next.

Mr. Bryce

RETIRED SOLDIERS AND SAILORS' EMPLOYMENT.

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read [Inquiry not completed].

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 258.]

HOUSE OF COMMONS (VACATING OF SEATS).

Ordered, That Mr. Blake be discharged from the Select Committee on House of Commons (Vacating of Seats).

Ordered, That Mr. Mac Neill be added to the Committee.—(*Captain Donelan.*)

PRIZE COURTS BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 311.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, with Amendments; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 242.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) (*re-committed*) BILL.—(No. 316.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILLS, &c.

Report from the Joint Committee, in respect of the Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*], brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 259.]

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) BILL.

Reported from the Joint Committee [with an amended Title].

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 260.]

Bill re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 348.]

LIGHT RAILWAYS (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Major Rasch, Bill to assimilate the Laws of England to those of Ireland in reference to Light Railways, ordered to be brought in by Major Rasch, Colonel Lockwood, Mr. Jasper More, Mr. Brookfield, Captain Naylor-Leyland, and Mr. Round.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 347.]

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 6th August 1894.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL.
(No. 161.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

The Amendments proposed by the Joint Committee, made; Standing Committee negatived.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): My Lords, this is the ordinary annual Statute Law Revision Bill. It is the result of the deliberations of the Committee, and it is important it should go to the other House as soon as possible. I propose, therefore, that Standing Order 39 be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to Order) and dispensed with; Amendments reported; Bill read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) (CANALS OF THE GREAT NORTHERN AND CERTAIN OTHER RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL. (No. 184.)

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) (BRIDGWATER, &c. CANALS) BILL.—(No. 185.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No.3) (ABERDARE, &c. CANALS) BILL.—(No. 186.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 5) (REGENT'S CANAL) BILL.—(No. 187.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) (RIVER ANCHOLME, &c.) BILL.—(No. 188.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 8) (RIVER CAM, &c.) BILL.—(No. 189.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 10) (CANALS OF THE CALEDONIAN AND NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 190.)

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 12) (GRAND CANAL, &c.) BILL.—(No. 191.)

Moved, That the Order made on the 19th day of March last—

> "That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next,"

be dispensed with, and that the Bills be read 2^a; agreed to: Bills read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

UNIFORMS BILL.—(No. 175.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived.

EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [H.L.].
(No. 55.)

Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION PROVISIONAL ORDERS CONFIRMATION (BARRY, &c.) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 54.)

Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

NAUTICAL ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 193.)

Read 3^a (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 194.)

Read 3^a (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

CROWN LANDS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Monday next (The Lord President [*E. Rosebery.*].)—(No. 199.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Earl of KIMBERLEY) moved that the House do meet to-morrow at a quarter past 4 instead of half-past 5, as he was informed there would be no Standing Committee sitting.

Motion agreed to.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Before the Motion for the Adjournment is put, as I understand there is no business after to-morrow until Monday next, I would suggest, if the Government does not object, that we should not sit until that day.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: I propose that the House, after sitting to-morrow, should adjourn until Monday next, and that the Second Reading of the Evicted Tenants Bill should be taken on that day.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Oh, yes; to that we are quite agreeable.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 6th August 1894.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [*Lords*] (*by Order*). (No. 307.)

CONSIDERATION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [31st July] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended.

And which Amendment was, in page 22 of the Croydon Extension Order, to leave out paragraph 34a:—

"The promoters or any company or person working or using the tramways shall not raise their fares on any Sunday or public holiday."—(*Mr. S. Herbert.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the said Order."

Debate resumed.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, that before the Debate on the Amendment was resumed he wished, in the absence of the hon. Member for Peterborough, to move the following Amendment:—

Paragraph 16, page 19, line 31, after "threepence," insert "but it shall not be lawful, without consent of the Local Authority, for the promoters or any company or person working or using the tramways to take or demand on Sunday or on any bank or other public holiday any higher rates or charges than those levied by them on ordinary week days."

***Mr. SPEAKER:** That Amendment cannot be moved now. It is not in Order.

Mr. WEIR: Will it be possible to move it later on?

***Mr. SPEAKER:** No, we have passed that portion of the Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): But if the Debate is postponed can it be done?

***Mr. SPEAKER:** No, as we have passed that portion of the Bill; it is too late.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Cannot the error be rectified at all?

***Mr. SPEAKER:** The Bill might be re-committed for the purpose of dealing with that part of it.

Mr. SNAPE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood) said, he understood that the Debate was adjourned on the last occasion in order that the views of the Croydon Corporation might be authoritatively expressed. He believed, however, no message had been received from that body.

Mr. BARROW (Southwark, Rotherhithe): Yes, I have one.

Mr. SNAPE said, he had heard nothing of it. He wished to support the retention of the clause as it stood in the Bill, and he did so all the more strongly because the Amendment of which the hon. Member for Peterborough and himself had given notice had been ruled out of Order. He gathered that the clause was to be opposed, and that the Tramway Company had circulated a paper expressing their objection to it. He waited with some curiosity to hear the grounds upon which this Company objected to a clause which had been accepted by similar companies. The Oxford and Aylesbury Bills both contained a similar provision, and if they did not object to it surely the Croydon Company might be expected to assent to it. He wished to say a few words as to the action of the Croydon Corporation. He thought there might be a too superstitious reverence for the opinions of Corporations, and although he was behind no one in his respect for local authority and local government, he did not from experience think that such authorities, acting under influences honourable enough in themselves, supported measures with which they were not at all in accord. He remembered that last year a Bill came before them strongly supported by the Liverpool Corporation. He took it upon himself to move the rejection of the measure, and telegrams came even from Leaders of the Liberal Party in the Liverpool Corporation urging hon. Members to support the Bill. Fortunately, the House disregarded those telegrams and threw out the Bill, and he was subsequently congratulated on the effect of his action by the very men who had urged Members to oppose him. And why did they take that course? Because they thought they were honourably bound by some old agreement which they condemned, but which they felt they must at least nominally support. In like manner he could not understand why the Croydon Corporation should go against the evident interests of the working classes in their Municipality by endeavouring to uphold the power of the Tramway Company to raise its fares on Sundays and on Bank Holidays. He believed the only objection the Company could raise to the clause was that whilst they were paying dividends of 5 per cent. on debentures and 6 per cent. on preference shareholders, they were paying nothing on their ordinary shares, and they desired the power to charge these increased powers for the benefit of the ordinary shareholders. But the working classes were the chief users of the tramcars on Bank Holidays and Sundays, and why should they be penalised for the benefit of the ordinary shareholder? There were surely other means of increasing the dividend. Why not raise the fares generally? The Underground Railway which permeated the Metropolis did not raise its fares on these days, and there was no reason why Tramway Companies should be allowed a monopoly in that direction, and should be able to tax the hard-earned wages of the labouring classes.

MR. S. HERBERT (Croydon) said, he had been informed that the Croydon Corporation, by a large majority, were against the clause being inserted in the Bill. As the Debate was adjourned on the last occasion solely in order to ascertain the views of that body, and as he had no right to again address the House on the subject, he would content himself with expressing the hope that the House would agree to his Motion.

MR. BARROW said, that when the question was put to the Croydon Corporation, of which he was a member, 33 voted in favour of the omission of the clause, six were against it, and nine were absent. Surely this was a matter on which the view of the Local Authority ought to be accepted.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): What was the point put to the Corporation? Were they asked to approve the clause as it stood in the Bill or their opinion of the Amendment in the name of the hon. Member?

MR. BARROW said, the point was whether or not they supported the Motion of the hon. Member for Croydon to omit the clause. He thought that after so emphatic a pronouncement on the part of the Corporation, their views should be allowed to prevail. They ought to have such a thing as Home Rule in the matter, and he could not understand why the hon. Member for Peterborough should interest himself so much in it.

MR. SNAPE: On a point of Order, if this Motion is passed, will it be in Order for me to move to re-commit the Bill?

MR. SPEAKER: On the Motion for the Third Reading it will be possible for the hon. Member to move that the Bill be re-committed in order to insert this or any other clause.

Question put, and negatived.

MR. CALDWELL: I beg to move that the Bill be now read a third time.

MR. SNAPE: Then I move that it be re-committed.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The Third Reading cannot be taken until To-morrow.

MR. SNAPE: In moving the Amendment which stands in my name, I wish only to say that I have a letter from the promoters accepting it.

Amendment proposed, in Clause 20, page 30, line 42, after "mile," insert—

"but it shall not be lawful without the consent of the Local Authority for the promoters, or any company or person working or using the tramways, to take or demand on Sunday or on any bank or other public holidays any higher rates or charges than those levied by them on ordinary week days." —(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 41, to leave out Clause 25.—(*Mr. Snape.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I beg to give notice that now we have reached towards the close of the Session Public Business will be taken at a quarter past 3, instead of half-past, in the future.

QUESTIONS.

THE "BOARD OF TRADE JOURNAL."

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the total cost incurred in collecting information for the *Board of Trade Journal*, the cost of editing, preparing, and printing the periodical; the cost of postages, distinguishing the cost of franked letters; the average circulation, distinguishing copies sold to the public from those sold to the advertising agent or distributed gratuitously; the amount of revenue derived from sale; the amount of revenue derived from advertisements; and the terms of the contract entered into with the advertising contractor; and does the Agricultural Department intend to accept advertisements for its new monthly Journal?

Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir; it is not possible to state the amount of the various items of expense incurred in editing, preparing, and issuing the *Board of Trade Journal*. Many of the services in respect thereof occupy small portions only of the time of Diplomatic, Consular, Colonial, and other officials, and most of the information published would be given to the public in some other form if not issued in the *Board of Trade Journal*. The headings in the Votes, under which certain of the charges are entered, were described in the answer given by the Secretary to the Treasury to the hon. Member for Sheffield's question of 20th April. As regards the circulation and revenue of the journal, it would be unusual and obviously inconvenient to the Public Service to state the particulars required by the hon. Member. The contract is not made with the Board of Trade; but as stated in the answer referred to, it would be shown to the hon. Member on calling at the Treasury. For an answer to the last paragraph of the hon. Member's question, I must refer him to the President of the Board of Agriculture.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): The financial arrangements sanctioned in the case of the proposed quarterly journal of the Board of Agriculture include the acceptance of a certain number of advertisements, but the Treasury have stipulated (1) that advertisements shall be charged at the full market rate, and (2) that no more of them shall be accepted than will cover the cost of publication without leaving a profit. We shall, of course, work strictly within the limitations thus prescribed.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: Can the President of the Board of Trade say whether the Journal is carried on at a profit, and, if so, how much profit?

Mr. BRYCE: I cannot.

THE MANUFACTURE OF CORDITE.

Sir W. HART-DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how soon any contracts for cordite will be given to any private firms who tendered for them about five weeks ago; whether the Government intend to give contracts to those private gunpowder manufacturers who have tendered, and who for many years have spent large sums on machinery, and put aside other work to execute orders required by the Government; whether those firms who have had much experience in adapting powders to conform to the required proof test in guns, should have contracts given to them in preference to firms who have been only manufacturers of high explosives for blasting and similar purposes, where no scientific gun proof is required; whether any part of the black powder works at Waltham

Abbey is working at night, and whether all such work will be abandoned, so as to give work to private firms who are at present manufacturing gunpowder for the Government under the Waltham Abbey cost prices; and whether he will consider the importance of maintaining the efficiency and general staff of the said private firms by giving them orders, so as not to render their assistance valueless in case of war?

MR. HANBURY (Preston): I should like to ask further if it is a fact that the amount of cordite in store at the present moment is only about one quarter of what is considered to be a safe quantity to have in store? Further, in regard to contracts with private firms, is any limitation imposed as to the kind of machinery with which the cordite is made? Has it to be made with machinery the patent for which was taken out by the present Director General of Ordnance Factories?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) said, that the interruption of the process of manufacture at Waltham Abbey had considerably depleted the stores, but with the co-operation of the Nobel Company the War Office had been able to produce cordite exactly answering its requirements. As to the particular conditions upon which these tenders were invited, it might be in substance stated that the Government required the cordite to be produced by the same processes, following in the main the same methods as employed at Waltham Abbey, though not necessarily employing the same machinery, giving, however, permission to observe, follow, and copy all the methods and processes adopted at Waltham. In answer to the question on the Paper the hon. Gentleman said: Nearly the whole quantity of cordite tendered for is for the Admiralty, who have not yet decided as to the supply required. I am therefore unable at present to answer paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 of the question. With regard to paragraph 3, however, it may be pointed out that the methods of manufacture of cordite and gunpowder are quite distinct. As to nightwork at Waltham Abbey, it is only the men in the incorporating mills who work a night shift regularly. If this were not done there would not be sufficient material for the day work of the rest of the factory, and men would have to be discharged. The desirability of maintaining the efficiency of private firms is never overlooked by the Department. As evidence of this I may state that orders have been placed with private firms this year which could have been executed at Waltham.

MR. HANBURY: With how many private firms have contracts been put out?

MR. WOODALL: No contracts have actually been entered into.

SIR W. HART-DYKE: Am I to understand that until something more definite is known as to the demand for cordite from the Admiralty and War Office the policy vaguely indicated by the hon. Gentleman will be that private firms will have a fair chance as regards the acceptance of tenders, and that they will be encouraged to put up machinery for supplying these explosives by some indication or promise of support?

MR. WOODALL said, he could understand the importance of the question to the right hon. Baronet's constituents——

SIR W. HART-DYKE: It has nothing to do with any particular constituency. It is a public question. It is a fact that there is a gunpowder factory in my constituency, but beyond my being able to get information there the point does not affect the question which I put—namely, are these private firms to be entirely closed, as regards the supply of Government ammunition?

*MR. WOODALL said, all he wished to guard against was anything in the nature of a promise. With regard to the trade generally, the policy of the Government was to keep alive as fully as possible the sources of private supply, and with that view they had determined that a very considerable proportion of the Government requirements would be obtained from private sources. At the same time, a grave responsibility would rest on the Department if it encouraged numerous undertakings to lay down plant, so that, while the Government accepted the general principle, they would act as prudently as possible and confine themselves to two, or at the most perhaps three, firms.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE STRABANE UNION.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what steps, if any, the Local Government Board Inspector has yet taken with regard to the labourers' cottages in the electoral division of Feddyglass, in the Union of Strabane?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Local Government Board inform me that their Inspector called upon the Medical Officer of Health to supply him with a list of the labourers in this electoral division who had applied for cottages, and to report on the condition of the existing cottages as required by law. Should he report that they are in an unsanitary state, the Inspector will at once proceed to the locality to ascertain whether other houses can be had in the district, and if not, he will consider whether it will be necessary to erect new ones to replace these stated to be unfit for habitation. The Medical Officer of Health has been called upon to report as soon as possible.

THE BIRR MILITARY SCANDAL.

Mr. WEBB (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the officers' quarters in Birr Barracks were lately entered by a masked party, and the door leading to the room occupied by the servants Kathleen O'Donovan and Annie Desmond broken open; that these girls identified some of the assailants as officers of a Militia regiment; that no charge has been brought against these girls; and that, nevertheless, they have been dismissed their situation, whilst no inquiry, beyond an abortive magisterial one, has as yet been instituted into the occurrence; and is it the intention of the Government to direct further proceedings? I wish, further, to ask the right hon. Gentleman if it is not a fact that these girls who have been dismissed are orphans, whose character is testified to be beyond reproach, and is it also a fact, as stated in *The Midland Tribune*, that one of the accused officers is nearly related to a high official largely responsible for the government of Ireland?

Mr. J. MORLEY: In this case the Crown have instructed the Sessional Solicitor to send up a bill at the next October Quarter Sessions against the four officers as to whom the Magistrates were evenly divided at the late investigation. The bill will contain charges for indecent and common assault, and copies of the bill and depositions will forthwith be served on the parties concerned. That being so, I can say no more on the merits of the case. As for the action taken in respect of the two girls, I have no official knowledge of anything done in consequence of the direction of the Military Authorities. It does not come within my Department.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will these officers be on bail in the meantime, or are they free to go where they like?

Mr. J. MORLEY: They will be treated like any other persons against whom proceedings are taken.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is there anything to prevent their leaving the country?

Mr. DODD: Will anything be done to compensate these girls, who seem to have done nothing?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I must repeat that the action was not taken by my Department.

Mr. WEBB: As to the statement in *The Midland Tribune*: Is one of the accused officers a relative of a high official in Ireland?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have no information as to that, and if I had all the information in the world, it would make no kind of difference. These persons will be treated exactly the same as anybody else.

COLONEL O'CALLAGHAN, J.P.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it has come to the knowledge of the Police Authorities in Clare that Colonel O'Callaghan, J.P., of Maryfort, Tulla, when recently applied to for a temporary licence to sell excisable drinks at a fair in the county by a man named Meehan, a publican of Tulla, used threatening language to Meehan, and fired several revolver shots at him from a window of his residence as Meehan was leaving his lawn; did the police guard who were then at the house, or their superior officers, take any, and, if so, what, action in the matter, or is it proposed to take any action; and, if not, will he explain why; has the attention of the Lord Chancellor been called to this conduct on the part of a Magistrate when called upon to discharge his duty; and what course does he propose to follow in the matter?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am informed that late on the night of May 12 last Mr. Meehan went to the residence of Colonel O'Callaghan for the purpose stated in the question, but that the latter refused to see him at this late hour. Owing to the conflicting statements of Colonel O'Callaghan's servant, who appears in the first place to have told him that the District Inspector of Police wanted to see him, and, after contradicting this, that Mr. Meehan wished to see him, Colonel O'Callaghan seems to have thought that there was something amiss, and he went to a back window and discharged his revolver in order to summon his protection party. Meehan, who at this point was walking away from the house, was detained by the police until the matter was cleared up. The shots were fired from Colonel O'Callaghan's bedroom window at the back of the house as Meehan was going in the opposite direction, so that there is no foundation for the statement that the shots were fired at him. I am also informed that it is not the fact that Colonel O'Callaghan used threatening language towards Meehan, whom, indeed, he did not see on the night of the occurrence. It is not proposed, under the circumstances, to take any action in the matter.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Might I ask if the right hon. Gentleman, in view of the effect likely to arise in the locality from the fact that this Magistrate fired a revolver out of his bedroom window in the middle of the night, whether he will call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the matter with a view to preventing Colonel O'Callaghan behaving in this disgraceful manner in the future?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am not sure that Colonel O'Callaghan's conduct deserves so strong an epithet as that used by the hon. Member. It appears he, being under personal police protection, thought there was something more in the visit than a person wishing to see him, and he fired his revolver—as he says, a very natural thing to do—in order to call the attention of his protecting party.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Am I to understand the right hon. Gentleman approves of the conduct of Colonel O'Callaghan in firing a revolver at that hour of the night in the circumstances?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I do not think I am called upon to express moral approval or disapproval, but I do think it is very likely I should have done the same thing myself in the circumstances.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Am I to gather from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman that if I go to Clare and consider there is anything amiss I am to be at liberty to fire a revolver? [*Laughter.*]

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am glad to know that the hon. Member is not under police protection. [*Laughter.*]

Mr. W. REDMOND: I beg to give notice that, in consequence of the answer, I will take the first opportunity of calling attention to the dissatisfaction which is caused in the neighbourhood by conduct of this kind on the part of Colonel O'Callaghan—blackguardly conduct, I call it.

LIVERPOOL LAIRAGES.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board have been appointed by the Privy Council, or the Board of Agriculture, to act as the Local Authority for the Port of Liverpool for the purpose of enforcing the provisions of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, and whether they profess to execute the provisions of said Acts; whether he is aware that the absence of proper reception lairs entails great suffering upon the animals after they are landed from the vessels; whether he has been acquainted with the fact that, on 27th July, 675 cattle, ex ss. *Parkmore*, were landed in the space allotted to 580; and whether he has learned that legal proceedings will probably be instituted in consequence of the damage done to the cattle?

Mr. H. GARDNER: The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board have not been appointed as the Local Authority for the Port of Liverpool under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts, but they are the owners of the foreign animals wharves there, and are responsible for the due observance of the Orders of the Board relating to such wharves. As I stated in reply to a previous question by my hon. Friend, we have no complaint to make as to the character of the existing arrangements at Liverpool for the reception of foreign animals; and so long as animals are not landed at the wharves in numbers exceeding the extent of the accommodation provided, I am satisfied that no avoidable suffering would be entailed by reason of those arrangements. My answer to the two concluding questions of my hon. Friend is in the affirmative, but I have no authority to intervene between the Docks Board and the owner of the animals in the matter, especially in view of its possible reference to the Law Courts.

THE LIVERPOOL CATTLE TRADE.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that the recently appointed General Manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board has endeavoured to have the cattle landed, utterly regardless of the interests and requirements of the trade at Birkenhead; whether he is aware that one lot of 400 were taken possession of by the Dock Board and stored in seven different places, a proceeding which harassed the owner, the cattle, and the buyers, and that the ss. *Numidian* was put into dock on the Liverpool side with her cattle on board in order to have her cargo discharged; whether this is against the Orders of the Board of Agriculture; and whether a sworn local inquiry will be instituted in this matter?

Mr. H. GARDNER: I am aware of and much regret the friction which exists between the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board and the importers of cattle at Liverpool, and I should be glad to do anything in my power to remove the difficulties which have arisen, but I cannot, of course, assent to the proposition contained in the first of my hon. Friend's questions. I have no reason to suppose, from the inquiries I have made respecting the various matters which my hon. Friend has brought under notice, that any breach of the Orders of the Board of Agriculture has occurred on the part of the Docks Board. I have no power to institute a sworn local inquiry as suggested, but I instructed one of my Inspectors to visit Liverpool, and to place himself in communication with the trade and the Docks Board, and I am hopeful that it will not be long before harmonious relations between the various parties concerned are restored.

WEXFORD GRAND JURY.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether a person can legally act in a Presentment Sessions Court unless he is a cesspayer in the county; whether it was legal for the Wexford Grand Jury, of which Mr. J. J. Percival, junior, was a member, to nil and reject presentments made by the Presentment Sessions, composed wholly of cesspayers; whether this Grand Jury is responsible for the tax of £800 upon the county for extra police; and whether he is prepared to order an inquiry into this grievance affecting the people of Wexford?

Mr. J. MORLEY: (1.) Section 4 of the Grand Jury Act empowers, and indeed requires, every Justice of the county, except a Resident Magistrate, to attend at Presentment Sessions and act with the associated taxpayers. The Justice need not be a cesspayer; all others must. (2.) The Grand Jury in their discretion may reject a presentment, even though approved of at Sessions, and they are under no obligation to assign reasons for or explain the rejection. (3.) There are 15 men of the extra police force at present serving in the County of Wexford. A reduction of this number is under consideration; but so long as the extra men remain, the Grand Jury has no option but to present the amount claimed on the certificates certified by the Under Secretary under Section 37 of 6 & 7 Will. IV. c. 13. (4.) The Executive has no powers over the Grand Jury, nor is it responsible to the Executive for the manner in which it performs its fiscal business.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: As this gentleman is only in lodgings as a lodger, will the right hon. Gentleman see if the provision of the law that a Grand Juror shall possess personalty to the value of £50 is carried out in his case?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I will inquire into the matter.

Mr. THOMAS HEALY (Wexford, N.): Are there not scores of Nationalists highly rated who are never summoned on the Grand Jury? Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to secure the appointment of High Sheriffs and Justices who will represent in some way the vast majority of the cesspayers?

[No answer was given.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (IRELAND) BOARD.

Mr. CREAN (Queen's Co., Ossory): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the meetings of the Congested Districts (Ireland) Board and of the members who attended them since the beginning of the present year; how many members form a quorum, and how many signatures are required to cheques issued by the Board; and are the accounts of the Board duly audited, and does the auditor surcharge in case of misapplication of funds?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I do not think any useful public purpose would be served by laying upon the Table of the House a Return of the nature indicated in the first paragraph of the question. At Board meetings the attendance of three members, and at committee meetings of two members, is necessary. Payments are not made by means of cheques, but by the usual payable orders. The signatures of members are not required to such orders. The accounts of the Board are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General, who possesses very ample powers in the case of any irregularity.

IRISH INDUSTRIES FOR LEITRIM.

Mr. CREAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Leitrim, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. George L. Tottenham, D.L., J.P., Glenade, County Leitrim, has offered to place at the disposal of the Congested Districts Board a building equipped with engine-power and shafting for the purpose of starting a woollen factory or other industry; is he aware that this practical and definite offer of Mr. Tottenham's was made with a view to give employment in the congested division of Aghamlish, where wool is one of the principal products; and that up to the present the Congested Districts Board have ignored the offer; is it a fact that up to the present no money has been spent on industries by the Board in the congested districts of Leitrim; and will he have inquiry made as to the feasibility of the scheme suggested by Mr. Tottenham?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Congested Districts Board have received from Mr. G. L. Tottenham a letter in which he offers to place at the disposal of the Board a building, recently used as a creamery, for starting a woollen or other industry. The offer has not been ignored, as alleged, but, on the contrary, careful inquiry has been made into the matter, and it will come before the Board at their next meeting. No money has yet been expended by the Board on such industries in the County Leitrim.

THROUGH RATES FOR CATTLE TRAFFIC.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the North Eastern Railway Company have informed the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland Company, that it was an error to state that they had expressed their willingness to receive applications for through bookings of live stock from the interior of Ireland, and that the North Eastern Company have only agreed to through bookings from certain Irish ports to York; and whether, as the Irish Companies are willing and anxious to facilitate through bookings, he will take the necessary steps to compel the North Eastern Company to comply with the law.

Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir. I am not aware that the North Eastern Railway Company have taken the action attributed to them. I must refer the hon. Member to my reply to his question of June 26th, and also to the Railway Company's letter of the 12th of the same month, a copy of which was forwarded to him two days later. It does not so far appear that the North Eastern Railway Company are breaking the law. I believe they are awaiting the communication from the hon. Member which he has been asked to supply. In that letter the Company promised carefully to consider any statement of the practical inconvenience which the hon. Member wished to remove.

MR. FIELD: Has the right hon. Gentleman received the letter which I sent to him—a letter from one of the principal Railway Companies in Ireland, pointing out that the North Eastern Railway Company have definitely refused to take through bookings?

MR. BRYCE: I understand that they have not refused. They have said in a letter forwarded to the hon. Member that they would be glad to hear from him the practical inconveniences which he suffers, and that they will then endeavour to meet him. I believe that they are still awaiting his reply.

MR. FIELD: As a matter of fact, did I not send the right hon. Gentleman a letter from the Midland and Great Western Company of Ireland pointing out these inconveniences?

MR. BRYCE: I do not think that that is inconsistent with the answer I have given. I said the North Eastern were still waiting to hear from the hon. Member.

MR. FIELD: Am I to understand that the statement by a great Railway Company of the refusal of the North Eastern to give facilities for through bookings is not sufficient to satisfy the right hon. Gentleman that something ought to be done in the matter?

MR. BRYCE: The answer I gave is not inconsistent with the view contained in the letter. I can only repeat the expression of my hope that the hon. Member will put himself into communication with the Company. I have no right to interfere otherwise than for purposes of conciliation. There is no evidence that the law has been broken.

MR. FIELD: Will the right hon. Gentleman grant an inquiry into the facts in his room with a view to conciliation? I understand it is for the Company to furnish facilities.

[No answer was given.]

"CONTRACTING OUT" ON RAILWAYS.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been repeatedly directed to the consignment rates now in use on various Irish railways, containing illegal conditions contracting the carrying Corporations out of any liability whatever; and whether he will communicate with the Companies and request them to discontinue this practice?

MR. BRYCE: My attention has been directed to this matter, and I concur in the reply given by my predecessor at the Board of Trade to a question put by the hon. Member on the 13th of April last. My right hon. Friend said—

> "Whether the conditions of the notes are reasonable or not, involves legal considerations of great nicety, but the existing law is amply sufficient to deal with such cases, and the persons aggrieved have the remedy in their own hands."

I may point out that if the conditions referred to in the question are illegal, as the question states, interference on my part is unnecessary, because the trader may disregard them. The proper course for them will be to test their legality before the Courts.

MR. FIELD: Am I to gather from the reply of the right hon. Gentleman that these traders have no resource except to go to law with a great carrying Corporation, and that the Railway Department of the Board of Trade is incompetent to help them?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL.

MR. ROSS (Londonderry): On behalf of the hon. and learned Member for Dublin University, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in the event of the Evicted Tenants Bill becoming law, the sum advanced under the Land Improvement Acts (amounting in all to £20,000) to tenants who have been evicted since 1st May, 1879, will become charges upon the new interests of such tenants as may be reinstated?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): There seems to be no doubt that the tenants when reinstated will continue liable to pay the charges in respect of the loans referred to. The course to be taken with regard to the instalments which became due during the time that the tenants were not in occupation will have to be considered when their reinstatement takes place.

MR. ROSS: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell me by what section that is enacted?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: It does not require any enactment. These loans follow the land in all cases.

GORT HURLING CLUB BAND.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Cork Co., N.E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Galway, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the action of the police in Gort, on Sunday the 29th ultimo, who prevented the band of the Gort Hurling Club playing, and seized some of the band instruments; is he aware that the police used their bâtons, and was any person injured more or less; and will the Head Constable, under whose orders the police appear to have acted, be directed to restore the band instruments, and not interfere with the playing of bands on the occasion of some hurling matches about to take place in Gort?

Mr. J. MORLEY: There is one inaccuracy in the question. The police did not use their bâtons, and therefore nobody was struck. I have given directions for the instruments taken from the band to be restored to them, and as I am not satisfied with the conduct of the officer on this occasion, I have directed that further and full inquiry shall be made.

THE LABOURERS' ACT LOAN TO LISTOWEL.

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state why the first instalment of the loan to the Listowel Board of Guardians, authorised by the Provisional Order of November 1893, is still unpaid, although several applications for payment of it have been made by the Board?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT (who replied) said: I understand that the Board of Guardians were informed on 21st ultimo, in reply to their application for the issue of an instalment of loan under the Labourers' Act, that the Mortgage deeds could not be completed until the amount of preliminary expenses (£16 11s.) had been received. On the 3rd instant that amount was paid in, and the deeds will be forwarded for execution by the Guardians at their next meeting. The first instalment will be issued when the deeds are returned executed.

STRADONE (CAVAN) MEDICAL OFFICER.

Dr. KENNY (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that for the past 60 years the medical officer of the Stradone Dispensary District, Cavan Union, has always resided in the town of Cavan, which is adjacent to borders of district; and that the present medical officer of said district of Stradone, Dr. James Mathews, has resided, since appointment 23 years ago, in Cavan, as his predecessors did; whether recently Dr. Mathews has, on the Report of the Local Government Board Inspector, Dr. Clibborn, been directed to take up his residence within the Stradone district; whether any neglect of duty on the part of Dr. Mathews was alleged by either the Inspector or the Local Government Board as the cause of the change; whether any serious charge of neglect has ever been made against Dr. Mathews; whether it is alleged that his residence in Cavan has caused any practical inconvenience to the poor of Stradone district requiring his services; whether he is aware that there is within the Stradone district no suitable residence for the doctor with his family; whether the Guardians of the Cavan Union and also the members of the Stradone Dispensary Committee have, on several occasions, remonstrated with the Local Government Board against the order of that body in reference to Dr. Mathews; and whether, if the facts are substantially as stated in the question, he will request the Local Government Board to reconsider their order with reference to Dr. Mathews?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The statements in the first and second paragraphs appear to be substantially correct. There being, however, no suitable residence for Dr. Mathews in his district the Local Government Board assented to his residing in Cavan until such time as he could take up his residence in the district. This he agreed to do. No complaints of neglect of duty on the part of Dr. Mathews have been brought to the knowledge of the Board. It is obviously inconvenient for the sick poor requiring the attendance of the doctor to have to travel to Cavan, which is five miles from

Stradone Dispensary and seven miles from the furthest portion of the district. The Guardians and Dispensary Committee have expressed themselves satisfied that the doctor should reside in Cavan, and he continues to reside there in pursuance of the arrangement to which I have referred, and to which he has agreed —namely, that he would take up his residence in the district as soon as he could procure a suitable residence therein.

LICENSING REGULATIONS IN DUBLIN.

Dr. KENNY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has yet arrived at any conclusion in reference to the question of directing the Police Authorities in Dublin not to oppose the granting to licensed houses, limited in number, well selected as to locality, &c., and with proper restrictions and precautions, permission to supply supper and other refreshments after closing hours, on which subject a question was recently addressed to him which he promised to consider?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have caused inquiry to be made into the matter, and am informed that there is no licensed restaurant accommodation in Dublin after 11 o'clock at night. On the other hand, however, there is no provision in the Licensing Acts authorising the granting of such facilities, and the police, therefore, would have no power to act in the manner suggested. There is power under the 11th section of the Licensing Act, 1874, to grant exemption orders for the accommodation of persons attending the markets or employed loading or unloading ships. The number of such exempted licensed houses is 33, but all are in the vicinity of the markets and along the quays, and none are privileged to open earlier than 4 a.m., and all must close at 11 p.m.

Dr. KENNY: Is it not the case that in London, in the neighbourhood of the theatres and the great newspaper offices, facilities are granted for getting supper up to 1 a.m.; has not the Recorder of Dublin expressed the opinion that similar facilities ought also to be granted in Dublin; and is it not merely owing to the opposition of the police that the facilities are not afforded to the residents of Dublin?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Has anybody—the Recorder or anyone else—the power to grant licences outside the statutory conditions?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The hon. Member for South Tyrone has indicated the real answer to the question. It is not a question of what the police do, or do not, wish. There is no power to grant licences outside the statutory authority.

Mr. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): Is the Chief Secretary aware that a theatre itself possesses a licence later than the hour named by the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: That is by special enactment.

Dr. KENNY: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will make further inquiry into this matter.

LABOURER'S COTTAGE FOR BALLINA.

Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the proposed site for the labourer's cottage in the Ballina division of the Nenagh Union, particulars of which have been communicated to him, whether he can now see his way to recommend the Local Government Board to sanction the action of the Board of Guardians in providing a cottage for the labourer Haskett in question, who they consider to be in urgent need of a home for himself and his family?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have inquired into this matter. An order will be sent down at once.

ABSTRACTOR CLERKS.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury how many writers have been promoted to be assistant clerks (abstractor class) since August, 1889, how many are nominated for such appointments, how many writers are now upon the Register, and what number of them are upwards of 60 years of age?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: Up to August 4, 1894, 461 copyists had been appointed to the class of abstractor or assistant clerks, 22 more have been certificated as such, and 33 have been nominated, but have not yet passed the required examination. The number of copyists now on the ordinary Register, including the 55 just mentioned, is 296. Of the balance of 241, those above 60 years of age number 35.

LYTHAM SCHOOL CHARITY.

MR. HANBURY: I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether the Lytham School Charity is one open to all denominations, the Trustees of which were until recent years chosen from both Protestants and Roman Catholics; whether the Trustees are now all Protestants, and the school a Protestant school; whether grants from the charity have for some years been made to another Protestant school and refused to a Catholic school educating the same class of children; whether, in reply to applications for a grant, the letters were simply acknowledged, and no grant allowed; whether the Trustees have themselves petitioned the Commissioners to be allowed to make grants to the Roman Catholic and Nonconformist schools; what the Commissioners intend to do in the matter; and whether, in view of the delay in passing a new scheme, they will at once make arrangements for giving effect meanwhile to the object of the charity as one for all denominations?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON, Suffolk, Eye): The Commissioners have for some years past had this important charity under consideration. They have drafted two Schemes under the Endowed Schools Acts, one of which has been published; but in view mainly of the difficulty of reconciling the wishes of Lytham with those of Kirkham, both of which are interested, they have not as yet seen their way to proceed further with a Scheme. The foundation is undenominational. The Commissioners have no precise information whether Trustees at one time included Roman Catholics. The schools of the foundation are public elementary schools in connection with the Church of England. Beyond this there is no direct information as to the creed of the Trustees. Grants have been made to another Protestant school. No grants have as yet been authorised to Roman Catholic schools by the Commissioners, but they have not been refused. At an inquiry held at Lytham by an Assistant Commissioner to discuss the terms of a Scheme the Trustees stated that they were prepared to make grants to the Roman Catholic and Nonconformist schools. As there is no immediate prospect of the establishment of a Scheme the Commissioners will suggest to the Trustees that, pending and subject to the terms of any Scheme, annual grants should be made by the Trustees to all the public elementary schools in Lytham not hitherto supported out of the trust.

MR. HANBURY: Will that recommendation be made at once?

MR. F. S. STEVENSON: Certainly, Sir; at once.

DANIEL'S CHARITY, SWANSCOMBE.

MR. HOWELL: I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether he can give the House any information with respect to the alleged breach of charity trust in the village of Swanscombe, in Kent, quoted in the newspapers as the Meriall's, or Daniel's, Charitable Bequest; whether it is true that the rent-charge upon certain property has not been paid for many years; whether the tenant occupier or owner who neglected to pay such rent-charge was a Trustee of such charity; whether the Statute of Limitations applies in such a case; and whether the Charity Commission are taking steps for the recovery of such charges under The Charity Trusts Recovery Act, 1891?

MR. F. S. STEVENSON: The rent-charge upon the property in question has not been paid for upwards of 40 years. It has recently been alleged that the person who neglected to pay the rent-charge was a Trustee of the charity, and that, consequently, the Statute of Limitations does not apply to such a case. The Commissioners have, within the last few days, invited evidence in support of the two foregoing allegations, with a view of considering whether or not they should take steps for the recovery of the charge under The Charitable Trusts Recovery Act, 1891.

MR. HOWELL: Am I to understand that the Charity Commissioners have during 40 years never investigated this charity?

MR. F. S. STEVENSON: I understand that this is one of those cases not brought to the notice of the Charity Commissioners.

LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES.

MR. HOWELL: I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether the Charity Commissioners will lay upon the Table of this House a Return giving the total income from all sources, under the London Parochial Charities Act, 1883, together with the details of the expenditure and the apportionment of the funds, or whether the Charity Commissioners will publish a detailed statement of such income, expenditure, and apportionment in their next annual Report ?

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON : The Charity Commissioners will offer no objection to a Motion for a Return of the accounts, receipts, and expenditure rendered to the Commissioners by the Trustees of the City of London Parochial Charities since the creation of that body. The Charity Commissioners do not propose to publish such a statement in their next Annual Report, but they do propose to include in that Report a complete account of the capital stock and cash which have been transferred and paid to the official Trustees of charitable funds in pursuance of the provisions of the central scheme by which the Trustees of the City of London Parochial Charities are constituted, and of the application and appropriation of those funds to the purposes prescribed by The City of London Parochial Charities Act, 1883.

COMMISSIONERS OF CHARITABLE BEQUESTS IN IRELAND.

Dr. KENNY : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what are the functions and duties of Commissioners of charitable donations and bequests in Ireland ; and whether it is in accordance with the Act relating to such Commissioners that persons having interests in or the direction of public charities, *ex officio* or otherwise, should be Commissioners of charitable donations and bequests ?

Mr. J. MORLEY : The functions and duties of the Commissioners of charitable donations and bequests are regulated by the Statutes 7 & 8 Vic. c. 97 ; 30 & 31 Vic. c. 54 ; and 34 & 35 Vic. c. 102. The Commissioners have no powers except such as are conferred by these Statutes. With regard to the second paragraph, I am informed that there is nothing in the Acts relating to the Commissioners disqualifying persons having interests in or the direction of public charities from acting as Commissioners of charitable donations and bequests. Moreover, Section 23 of 30 & 31 Vic. c. 54 provides that a Judge shall not be disabled by reason of his being a Commissioner from hearing any case which may arise under the Charitable Donations and Bequests Act.

Dr. KENNY : Is it in accordance with the intention and policy of the Act that persons interested in public charities should become members of this body ?

Mr. T. M. HEALY : Can the right hon. Gentleman or anyone else find out what the policy of the Act is ?

Mr. W. REDMOND : Is not the hon. Member quite capable of answering his own question ?

Mr. J. MORLEY : I think he is fully as capable as I am.

THE CHINO-JAPANESE WAR.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland) : On behalf of my colleague in the representation of Sunderland, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, seeing that war has been declared between China and Japan, neutral vessels will be interrupted in their trade between those two countries ; if so, what time will be granted for sailing to and from belligerent ports ; within what distance from British Indian and other colonial coasts and harbours capture and seizure by either of the belligerent Powers will be considered legal ; and if it is intended to define, for the guidance of British merchants and shipowners, what description of merchandise is to be considered contraband of war, thus avoiding, as far as possible, complications similar to those which arose during the American Civil War ; and whether coal conveyed to non-blockaded ports will be legal traffic ?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick) : The Japanese Government have promised that no warlike operations will be undertaken against Shanghai and its approaches, and upon this condition the Chinese Government will not obstruct the approaches of Shanghai. The contending Powers will have, speaking generally, no right to interfere with neutral vessels, except in the event of an effective blockade with due notification, or in a case of contraband of war. It would be a dangerous and unusual course for Her Majesty's Government to undertake to define by a general statement what is and what is not contraband of war; for instance, coal has been held not to be contraband of war as a general rule, but it is possible that it might in certain cases become so. Her Majesty's Government, of course, adhere to the doctrine which they have heretofore maintained, that it is not for the belligerent to decide what is and what is not contraband of war, regardless of the well established rights of neutrals.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE TRAVELLING INSPECTORS.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the Board of Agriculture, in order to trace to its primary source certain contagious diseases among animals, have for this purpose appointed 31 Travelling Inspectors, one, the chief, with a salary of £900 per annum, and 30 others at £250 a year; whether these gentlemen possess the scientific knowledge rendering them capable of satisfactorily performing such duties; and whether the Travelling Inspector has supplanted the Veterinary Inspector, the person who should be called upon to perform such services?

Mr. H. GARDNER: The duties assigned to the Principal of the Animals Division of my Department and to the temporary Assistant Inspectors appointed for swine fever business, who are the officers to whom I understand the hon. Baronet to refer, do not require for their performance the possession of veterinary or scientific knowledge. On the retirement, at the end of last year, of the former Director of the Veterinary Department, a re-arrangement of duties was sanctioned, and my veterinary officers are now exclusively engaged on work of a professional character, but no work requiring the possession of veterinary knowledge has been transferred to an officer not possessing such knowledge.

COMPANIES AND THE STAMP ACT, 1891.

Mr. FISHER (Fulham): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether all Companies authorised by Parliament to raise either original or additional share capital since the year 1890 have complied with the provisions of Section 113 of The Stamp Act, 1891; and whether he would have any objection to granting a Return giving the names of all such Companies and the amount due and paid under the conditions of The Stamp Act, 1891?

Sir W. HARCOURT said, there had been a few cases of Companies being unable to raise the capital authorised in which the Inland Revenue had been unable to obtain payment of the duty, there being no assets. He saw no objection to granting the Return.

OPPOSED BUSINESS AFTER MIDNIGHT.

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will consider the expediency next Session of having the Rules of Procedure so revised as to render it impossible for a single Member to object to the conduct of Public Business after 12 o'clock?

Sir W. HARCOURT: This is a matter I have not considered, and I am not prepared to offer any opinion upon it.

Dr. MACGREGOR: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, considering that Public Business cannot be transacted, whether he will consider the desirability of adopting the principle of devolution—of applying the good old cry of Home Rule all round?

Sir W. HARCOURT: This is a rather large question.

WEST HIGHLAND RAILWAY—MALLAIG RAILWAY.

Dr. MACGREGOR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, considering that the West Highland Railway (Mallaig Extension) Bill has now received the Royal Assent, and that all the conditions imposed upon the promoters by the Treasury have been fulfilled, he is now prepared to introduce a Bill empowering the Treasury to give the guarantee in regard to the capital to which they are pledged, and upon which the construction of the line depends?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I am afraid it would be impossible to introduce a Bill for this purpose during this Session, but I will take care that the matter is duly considered before next Session.

Dr. MACGREGOR: Has the right hon. Gentleman received a Memorial from the Commissioners of Fort William on this subject?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir.

Dr. MACGREGOR: May I ask whether, in view of the failure of the fishing on the West Coast, and the probable destitution which will follow during the winter and spring, the right hon. Gentleman will consider the matter in order to enable the Railway Company to go on with their operations, and thus provide work for the people?

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): May I ask whether the Government will take the usual course of carrying out the undertaking of the late Government; whether it is merely a matter of time which determined the question of not introducing the Bill; and whether the House were to gather that, if an understanding is arrived at that the Bill will not be opposed, the right hon. Gentleman will undertake to bring it in this Session?

Sir W. HARCOURT: Of course, we shall carry out the undertaking given by our predecessors in the matter.

THE ERASMUS SMITH CHARITY.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the Chairman of the Erasmus Smith Board, on the 11th of March, 1886, stated, in reply to the late Lord Chancellor Naish and Lord Justice FitzGibbon, that the gross rental of the Erasmus Smith Schools estates was £10,014, and the net income more than £8,000; if so, can he explain how the income has fallen since 1886 to £7,000; has his attention been called to the fact that the High School, Harcourt Street, Dublin, attended by 300 pupils, is one of the Erasmus Smith Schools, though it is more than 20 miles from the nearest of the Erasmus Smith estates, and more than 100 miles from the chief parts of those estates in Limerick and Tipperary, where the gross rental of the Erasmus Smith School estates is £6,000; how many of the pupils attending the grammar schools at Tipperary, Galway, Drogheda, and Harcourt Street are children of the Erasmus Smith tenants, or can be described as "other poor children" who resided within two miles of Tipperary, Galway, or Drogheda; is he aware that Erasmus Smith was compelled by the laws of his day to appoint exclusively Protestant Trustees and Protestant schoolmasters, and to provide that the pupils of his schools should be sent to Trinity College, which admitted only Protestants; and that these provisions are relied upon by the members of the Education Commission, who wish to exclude Catholics from the benefits of the endowments; is he aware that Lord Justice FitzGibbon has refused to sign the Draft Scheme signed by Mr. Justice O'Brien and two of the Assistant Commissioners, on the ground that whatever Erasmus Smith was compelled to do by the laws of his day is, in his opinion, not evidence of his intentions; and whether, seeing that more than 95 per cent. of the children for whose free education Erasmus Smith left the endowment are Catholics, he can take any steps to secure the adoption of a scheme which will admit Catholics to the benefits of these endowments?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I believe it is a fact that the Chairman of the Erasmus Smith Board stated, on March 11, 1886, that the net income of the schools estates was more than £8,000. The net income of that Board for the year ended May, 1891, was returned to the Commissioners as £6,583. They inform me they have no information as to the causes of the reduction referred to. The circumstances under which the school in Harcourt Street was founded are stated at page 108 of the Report of the Commissioners for the year 1885-6. In replying to a question put by my hon. and learned Friend on Monday last, I gave the number of pupils attending the schools at Galway, Drogheda, and Tipperary. These figures were courteously supplied by the Governors who, however, stated they were unable to give any further information. The Commissioners have no information in the matter. The functions of the Commissioners are of a judicial character. At the conclusion of the public sitting held to consider the objections to the Draft Scheme for the Erasmus Smith Endowments the Judicial Commissioners stated that they would appoint another occasion on which they would publicly state the conclusions at which they had arrived, with such reasons as they might think it right to give. The only document issued by the Commission was a Draft Scheme the objections to which were discussed at the public sitting referred to, and the

Judicial Commissioners have not been able to concur in signing any scheme to be submitted to the Lord Lieutenant. They have fixed a day in October at which to announce their decision, and to state the grounds of their opinions. This sitting could not have been appointed for an earlier date.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it a fact that the effect of the action of the Protestant members of the Board, in refusing Catholics fair play, will be that the entire endowment will revert to the Protestants for all time?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am not informed upon that point, but I hope it is not so.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) ARBITRATION BILL.—(No. 346.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he rose, in pursuance of an understanding to which he was a party on Thursday last, to move a clause dealing with a voluntary agreement. The object of it was that where there was a voluntary agreement arrived at between the landlord and an evicted tenant the Arbitrators should have power to deal with the matter as if there had not been an agreement and as if proceedings had taken place in the manner set out in the first clause of the Bill. He thought that the House would see that the effect of the new clause would be—certainly the design was—to encourage and facilitate voluntary agreements. If they should be fortunate enough to find landlords and tenants in the mood towards one another which it was hoped would prevail, and which was indispensable if the Bill was to have the effect it was desired to have, they would agree that this provision would tend to facilitate settlements.

New Clause—

(Voluntary agreement.)

"If within one year after the commencement of this Act a petition with respect to any holding in which a former tenant can be reinstated by an order of the Arbitrators under this Act is presented to the Arbitrators jointly by the landlord and the former tenant, and also, if there is a new tenant, by such new tenant, stating that a voluntary agreement between the parties for the reinstatement in the holding of the former tenant has been entered into, and the Arbitrators are satisfied that such agreement is to the like effect as an order which they could make under this Act, and has been entered into *bonâ fide*, they may in their discretion make an order for carrying into effect such agreement, subject to such conditions or variations as they think fit, and thereupon the provisions of this Act shall apply in like manner as in the case of any other order of the Arbitrators for reinstatement under this Act."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. T. M. HEALY wished to know if it was the right hon. Gentleman's view that under this clause or any portion of the Bill, assuming that an order should have been made against the tenant on any ground, the tenant would be able to apply a second or a third time in case there might be a change of view on the part of the new tenant or landlord? He did not know if that was contemplated. It might well be that the landlord or the tenant might change his mind, and it might be possible not to regard an order if once made as of such a general character as to debar or stop further proceedings in case of change of view.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, it seemed to him that the point was met by provisions as they originally stood.

Sir R. T. REID said, that if the Arbitrator refused to make an order in the case of the landlord being in occupation, or the new tenant being in occupation, the decision would be binding between the parties so far as any compulsory or judicial proceedings were concerned. But even in that case if both parties subsequently saw fit to change their view, repenting of the course they had taken, and desired to arrive at a settlement, the clause now before the House would enable them to act as though no order had been made.

Mr. SEXTON said, he should have thought that whatever might be done in a case where the landlord showed cause, and where on his showing cause the petition was dismissed, that at any rate in the case of the new tenant where he only objected and the merits of the case were not gone into, that subsequently the merits might be considered. Where the landlord objected it might be a hardship that the matter was at an end; but if the objection was by the tenant and the landlord did not intervene, he (Mr. Sexton) should suppose that it would be open for the former tenant at a future date to embark in a new petition.

Sir R. T. REID said, his view was that if objection was withdrawn there was no necessity to bar proceedings. But as long as objection was raised it must stay proceedings.

Mr. SEXTON: On withdrawal of objection the proceeding would go on in the ordinary way?

Sir R. T. REID: Yes.

Mr. SEXTON said, the clause was discussed in Committee, and the danger pointed out was that it might perhaps be used by collusive agreement between the parties to secure the benefit of the funds provided under the Act. He should be glad to hear that the section was limited to holdings either in the occupation of the landlord on the 19th April, 1894—the date of the introduction of the Bill—or of a new tenant other than the tenant who had been evicted. If the intention of the clause was clearly set forth collusion need not be feared.

Sir R. T. REID said, that only the cases of those tenants who would be reinstated under Section 1 were in contemplation.

Motion agreed to.

Clause read a second time, and added to the Bill.

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he now desired to move the Migration Clause, and in doing so it was not necessary to say many words on the subject. The suggestion was first thrown out in Debate by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Carson), and it was subsequently embodied in an Amendment by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). The wording of that Amendment he (Mr. J. Morley) had not found quite satisfactory; but even in the form in which he was now submitting it, so far as he himself was concerned, he did not expect great results from the proposal. The Congested Districts Board during the two years he had had an intimate knowledge of their proceedings had found it difficult to get land for migration purposes. Very little land, for reasons which were obvious, was accessible; therefore, he frankly confessed that he did not expect that any great good would flow from the clause. But, at the same time, it was quite worth while to leave the door open for such proceedings. If the Arbitrators were lucky enough to find adjacent to the holdings of evicted tenants a little crop of vacant farms, it would be desirable that they should have power to put the tenants on to them. Anxious to make the Act as flexible as possible, and to give as many opportunities for reinstatement in any shape or form compatible with justice, he begged to move the new clause. He might say that the added portion was due to certain technical points raised and the limitation of the amount which the Commissioners had at their disposal by the Act of 1891.

New Clause—

(Migration.)

"(1) In order to provide for cases in which new tenants object to an order for reinstatement of former tenants, the Arbitrators may recommend to the Land Commission the purchase of land for the purpose of providing holdings for such former tenants, and thereupon the Land Commission may purchase any land for such purpose, and may issue guaranteed land stock for the payment of the purchase money, and may re-sell the said land to the former tenants in such portions and subject to such conditions as they may think expedient, and for these purposes may exercise all the powers conferred on them by the Land Purchase Acts, as defined by The Land Purchase (Ireland) Act, 1891, and upon any such former tenant agreeing to purchase, the said Acts shall apply as if such former tenant had been the occupying tenant of the lands which he agrees to purchase. (2) Rules may be made by the Treasury for adapting to the purposes of this section the enactments of the said Land Purchase Acts respecting the purchase of estates by the Land Commission, and respecting advances by means of guaranteed land stock, and otherwise for carrying into effect this section. (3) But nothing in this section or the said rules shall authorise the creation of guaranteed land stock in excess of the amount authorised by The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that if the right hon. Gentleman had put in the same condition as was contained in Clause 2 as to the guarantee deposit of one-fifth the new section could be got to work. There was a talk as to the difficulty of obtaining land, but he fancied there was a sufficiency of vacant land in the Landed Estates Court which the landlords would be glad to sell if it were not for this restriction as to one-fifth and other restrictions in the Land Purchase Act of 1891.

MR. J. MORLEY said, that as the hon. and learned Member was aware, the Congested Districts Board had power to acquire land, and there was a Bill before the House to enable the Board to acquire land without making the guarantee deposits. There was a provision that in case there was a default, the Land Commissioners could come down on the annual income of the Congested Districts Board to make it good. In the present case he did not see who they could enable the Land Commissioners to come down on. They felt the necessity of this in the case of the selling landlord, but he saw great difficulty in the way of the insertion of such a provision in the present case.

MR. SEXTON said, there would be great disparity between the case of purchase by tenants of old holdings under the Act and the purchase of new holdings, and the obligation of the landlords to leave a fifth of the purchase money as a guarantee deposit would render operations under the clause very difficult. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out with perfect accuracy that when the full purchase-money was paid over to the landlord under the ordinary operations of the Bill the Land Commission could come down on the Church Temporalities Fund in case of default. But he would point out that under the Land Purchase Act of 1891, in the last resort, defaults could be made good by a levy upon the local rates, and it was worth considering at this late stage of the Bill whether, if there were a general consent, it might not be as well to facilitate the working of this clause by providing that any default—which possibly would be infinitesimal and probably non-existent—might in the same way be made good by a levy on the rates. It would be a great pity if a provision so vital as that contained in this clause were rendered inoperative by the unwillingness of the landlord to sell in consequence of having to put down one-fifth of the money as a guarantee deposit. He desired to allude to a very important defect in the clause, which would go far to render it inadequate for its purpose. The clause as it stood only provided for cases in which the new tenant objected to an order for reinstatement. These were the minority of the cases. The largest calculation he had seen of the number of new tenants put them down as 1,500, and there were 4,000 farms concerned in the sphere of operations of the Bill. In the case of 1,500 farms, if the new tenants objected to retire in favour of the old tenants, then the latter could be moved to unoccupied lands to be purchased by the Land Commission, and upon which they would be provided with new farms. But there were 2,500 other tenants who might be ousted, not by the objection of the new tenants, but where the landlord successfully showed cause against their reinstatement, and where the reasons which might be judged to have enabled him to so succeed might have no bearing on the hardship done to the tenant by eviction or on the equity of restoring him. He submitted, therefore, that a tenant in the case where the farm was vacant, and the landlord opposed him successfully, had in equity as good a right to be provided with lands as that tenant had in the case where a new tenant objected. The hardship was the same in both cases, and the Arbitrators, at any rate, ought not to be prevented—as they would be by the clause as it stood—from dealing with such cases, but should have the option of providing land when a tenant was kept out by the opposition of the landlord, just as well as by the opposition of the new tenant. To make the Bill equitable in its working he would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would consent to this Amendment: After the words "reinstatement of former tenants," in the second line of the clause, to insert the words

"or in which the Arbitrators, after hearing the parties under Section 1 of this Act, dismiss the petition for reinstatement."

*MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member desire to move an Amendment?

MR. SEXTON: No. I only ask if the Government would assent to this suggestion.

SIR R. T. REID said, the contemplated Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would, of course, effect a considerable alteration in the Bill. The position was this: In the case where the landlord was now in occupation the Arbitrators had power to investigate the merits and, if they thought fit, they might apply the compulsory powers, and compel the landlord, whether he pleased or not, to dispossess himself and reinstate the former tenant. In the case where the new tenant entered an objection, his objection was final and conclusive, and therefore it might well be—and indeed was much more likely—that in the second class of cases instances of hardship would exist rather than in the first class. In the first class there was the compulsory element for dealing with their cases; in the case of the second class there was an entire absence of compulsory power. If they were to say that, notwithstanding the existence of compulsory powers, the Arbitrators might be free to use these migratory powers in cases where the landlord was in occupation it would tend rather to dispose the Arbitrators to use the second instead of the first remedy. If they had this alternative course, to which the Land Commissioners could have recourse, it might make it less probable that the former tenants would be reinstated in their holdings. The provision had not been successful in the Land Purchase Act, and under the circumstances he thought it better to confine the migratory power to those cases in which there were no compulsory powers already existing. He hoped the hon. Member would not move the Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he desired to move an Amendment widening the scope of the clause. He agreed with the Solicitor General that it would be dangerous to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Kerry. After the merits of the cases of the evicted tenants had been submitted to the Arbitrators and decided it would be dangerous to allow them to be re-opened. There was just one case where probably a grievance would arise in the case of the tenant evicted by the small landlord who entered on the land himself and improved it. In a case of that kind the Arbitrators would find themselves in a difficulty. The merits of the landlord would be exceptional—he would have improved the land since the eviction—and the Arbitrators would be unwilling to dispossess the landlord, who would be practically a new tenant. But these would be extreme cases. He did not think that half-a-dozen of them would be likely to arise. The Amendment he wished to move was, after the word "Arbitrator" in the second line, to insert—

> "shall ascertain the value of the tenant right of the former tenant at the date of his eviction and award him such compensation as, in their opinion, he is entitled to, having regard to arrears of rent for which he was dispossessed; and they shall determine in what proportion such compensation is to be paid respectively by the new tenant, the landlord, and the Arbitrators themselves, out of the moneys at their disposal for the purposes of this Act."

This would give the Arbitrators power to confer on the old tenant pecuniary compensation as an alternative to finding land for him.

MR. J. MORLEY (interrupting) said, the Amendment did not arise on the clause under discussion.

MR. HARRINGTON said, it was an alternative to the method of compensation proposed in the clause. The tenant right of a holding might have been fixed at £500. The tenant might have been evicted for non-payment of £50—one year's rent—indeed, under certain circumstances, he might have been cleared out for half a year's rent. He would have been deprived of his holding, and what he (Mr. Harrington) now proposed was that the landlord and the new tenant who had got the benefit of the evicted tenant's tenant-right beyond the sum of £50 should compensate the man in respect of it.

MR. SPEAKER (interrupting): This is an alternative to the scheme of migration, and would more properly come in as a distinct Amendment. It would be advisable not to mix up new matter with the migration scheme before the House. I do not know whether it would meet the hon. Member's view to propose his alternative plan at the end of Clause 4.

MR. HARRINGTON said, he bowed to Mr. Speaker's ruling, but the Amendment of the Chief Secretary did not compensate in the same way as the plan he proposed. His reason for moving it here was that he desired to empower the

Arbitrators to give compensation from three sources—from the landlord, if he had benefited from the tenant right; from the new tenant if he had also benefited; and from the funds at the disposal of the Arbitrators themselves.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the Amendment should come in at the place indicated.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he would move to add words at the end of the clause in the sense he had indicated on the Second Reading. He proposed to add—

"Sub-section (b) of Section 2 of this Act shall apply to sales under this section."

SIR R. T. REID said, he thought better words would be to add, after "purchase," the words

"and the provisions of this Act as to guarantee deposit shall apply."

MR. T. M. HEALY said, the Irish Church Surplus Fund still continued a considerable sum, and if the words of the hon. and learned Member would give a charge on the fund similar to that of Section 2, he should be satisfied. Still, he thought his were against words to capture the Fund.

SIR R. T. REID said, he had no doubt of the effect of the words he suggested.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that being the case, he would not move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, at the end of the Clause, to add the words "and the provisions of this Act as to guarantee deposit shall apply."—(*Sir R. T. Reid.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, he had the following New Clause on the Paper:—

(Purchase of goodwill of former tenants.)

"Where the new tenant or the landlord objects to an order for reinstatement, or the former tenant agrees to accept a sum in lieu of reinstatement, the Arbitrators may take evidence of the value of the goodwill of the former tenant, and, upon all claims on the holding being renounced by the former tenant, may award him such sum as they deem reasonable, regard being had to the amount which otherwise would have been paid to the landlord the new tenant and the former tenant under Section 4, Sub-section 2, of this Act, if an order for reinstatement had been made."

The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had accepted the Amendment in substance, and had put down words to the same effect. There was just this difference: that his (Mr. Healy's) proposal would give the former tenant the alternative of either letting the holding remain in the hands of the new tenant, or of getting a sum of money in lieu. He would discuss that when they came to the Amendment of the Chief Secretary.

MR. J. MORLEY said, he would move to insert in Clause 1 (application by tenant to Arbitrators and procedure thereon, where landlord remains in occupation), words limiting the application of the clause to holdings which, in the opinion of the Arbitrators, are agricultural or pastoral in their character, or partly agricultural and partly pastoral. The Amendment, he explained, was designed to meet an objection urged in Debate on the Second Reading, that even a house in a town might, under the Definition Clause of the Act of 1881, come under the operation of the Bill. The Amendment made it quite plain that the Act was only intended to apply to agricultural and pastoral holdings.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 5, after the word "Ireland," to insert the words—

"in the opinion of the Arbitrators under this Act, agricultural or pastoral in its character, or partly agricultural and partly pastoral."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SEXTON said, he understood that the effect of the words, having regard to the opinion of the Arbitrators under the Act, would be that the action of the Arbitrators would be final, and not liable to be questioned in a Court of Law. Any question as to the interpretation of the right of the tenant to a fair rent could only arise after reinstatement.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, the Amendment met the objection they took to the Amendment of the Solicitor General the other day. But it did not deal with the question of sub-letting. He had no doubt that under the word "holding," as it was proposed to be inserted in the Act, an evicted tenant who had sub-let would not come under the Statute, because "holding" would have the same meaning as under the Act of 1881. A tenant under the Act of 1881, in order to be entitled to its benefits, had to be in possession of his holding, and the whole holding. He did not say that the Arbitrators would be bound by a technical view of that Act; but he was quite satisfied that, under a compulsory system, they would be restrained by injunction of the Court of Queen's Bench if they proceeded to deal with subject-matter in regard to which they had not jurisdiction. He thought, therefore, some provision was necessary to deal with the ironclad views which had been taken by the Courts as to the meaning of the word "holding"—to deal with the case of a holding which was partly sub-let, either at the time of the eviction or since. In case the Bill should fortunately be read a second time in another place, he asked the Chief Secretary to consider whether "holding" was a sufficiently elastic term. He had not seen the Amendments on the Notice Paper until this morning, and, therefore, had not had an opportunity of putting down Amendments.

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he was not competent to say what would happen in other places, but he would consider the point.

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 25, after the word "parties," to insert the words "in open Court or, if the parties so desire, in private."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Question propored, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, he wished to draw attention to a point which was not met by the Amendment. He was one of those who thought that the proceedings before the Arbitrators should in general be in public. He recognised, however, that cases might come before the Arbitrators where the parties agreed that it would be well to have the matter dealt with in private. Both those states of affairs were dealt with in the Amendment. He would suggest, as a third course, that where the parties could not agree as to whether the proceedings should be in open Court or in private, the Arbitrators should have a power to make an order on the question.

Mr. J. MORLEY could not accept the suggestion, as it might be invidious to the Arbitrators.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. J. MORLEY proposed to amend Sub-section 5 of Clause 1, which provides that the landlord or tenant may apply to have a fair rent fixed in the case of tenancies determined before the passing of the Act of 1881, by extending its provisions to leasehold tenancies determined before the passing of the Act of 1887.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 19, after the words "term," to insert the words—

"Or being held under a lease was determined before the passing of The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. SEXTON said, the effect of the Amendment was that leaseholders evicted between 1879 and 1887 would be entitled to have fair rents fixed. He would invite attention to another point. Not only were there men who were present tenants before eviction, but there were also persons who would have become present tenants. He thought the rights of these men under the Bill should be the same as if they had continued in possession; and he would propose, after the word "apply," that these words should be added—"as if the former tenant had remained in possession." This Amendment could be dealt with after that of the Chief Secretary.

Sir J. RIGBY said, he thought the words proposed by the Government were right. They had been carefully considered. The Act of 1887 dealt only with leaseholders at the commencement of the Act, and the question now was, how were they to deal with leaseholders whose tenancies expired through being determined before the passing of the Act?

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, that such leaseholders by the 21st section of the Act of 1881 were to be deemed present tenants notwithstanding the expiration of the lease.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, there were two classes of tenants. The 21st section of the Act of 1881 gave all the advantages of that Act to leaseholders who expired down to 1887, but the Act of 1887 dealt with a different class of leases altogether—leases in different towns—so that they were leases which would not be covered.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. SEXTON said, he was doubtful about the matter which the Attorney General had referred to. The Amendment had reference not to the Arbitrators, but to the Land Courts. If the proposal had referred to the Arbitrators, who were not subject to strict rules of law, and could act on their discretion, he should be satisfied that the intention of the Government would be carried into effect. He did not think the studies of the Attorney General had given him complete familiarity with the subtleties and refinements of the Land Courts in Ireland; and if the hon. and learned Gentleman knew as much as the Irish Members did about the extraordinary tangle into which the Land Acts had been brought by Irish Judges of various capacities and degrees, he would hesitate before committing himself to the assurance he had given—that the words proposed could be relied upon to bring about any predetermined result. He had no doubt that a tenant evicted between 1879 and 1881, and a leaseholder evicted between 1879 and 1887, would be able to get back to their farms under this Bill, but there the difficulty would begin. They would apply to have fair rents fixed, and then the question would arise whether the words of the Government would not be fatal to the claims of some of them. It was necessary to press the hon. and learned Gentleman to bear in mind what Chinese subtlety of intellect was applied to the administration of the law in Ireland, and to give the House ground to entertain a national hope that the intentions expressed by the Government would be carried out. He moved, after the word "apply," in line 19, to insert, "as if the tenant had remained in possession."

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 19, after the word "apply," to insert the words "as if the tenant had remained in possession."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he thought that as the clause now stood no leaseholder except one whose lease expired before the passing of the Act of 1887 could have a right to make the application referred to in it. He did not think that the Amendment which had just been inserted had bettered the clause. He asked the Government whether, in case the Bill escaped fatality at a particular fence in another place, they could not simplify the clause so as to carry out their undoubted intentions?

Sir R. T. REID said, he agreed with hon. Members opposite that, judging from what he had learnt during the last two or three months, ingenuity beyond words had been applied to the construction of the Irish Land Acts. He took it that the purpose at which both the Government and the Irish Members were aiming was that people who could not get a fair rent fixed because they were evicted before 1881 should be enabled to come in under this Bill and have a fair rent fixed, and that leaseholders who were evicted before the passing of the Act of 1887 should also be enabled to come in and have a fair rent fixed. After 1887 the leaseholders became present tenants——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Not in all cases.

Sir R. T. REID said, that at all events the case put to the Government was that of the leaseholder who was evicted prior to the Act of 1887. With considerable trouble and labour the Government had arrived at the words now proposed, which he thoroughly agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would effect their purpose. At the same time, he admitted that it might be necessary to have the provision emphasised, and he thought that if the word "now" were inserted in line 22 it would clinch the matter. The words would then read—

> "In so far as the said Acts now permit of a fair rent being fixed in respect of a tenancy of the same kind as the tenancy determined."

Mr. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.) thought, if he might say so with all humility, that the interpretation put upon the provision by the Attorney General (Sir J. Rigby) was accurate, and that the difficulty possibly, perhaps probably, would not arise, but he would suggest that all doubt might be put an end to by the addition of the words "assuming that such tenancy had continued up to the date of the order." He thought that no trouble could arise if this suggestion were adopted.

Mr. SEXTON said, the resources of human ingenuity would be exhausted in distorting the meaning of the words proposed by the Government for the purpose of keeping the tenants out of their rights.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman has already spoken, in moving the Amendment.

Question put, and negatived.

Another Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 22, after the word "Acts," to insert the word "now."—(*Sir R. T. Reid.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' be there inserted."

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he had given this matter some consideration, and he did not think that the clause, as the Government proposed to make it read, was at all satisfactory. The question of the status of the tenants when the order for their reinstatement was made was, he presumed, intended to be settled in every case by the sub-section. What, however, would be the status of a tenant who was evicted between the 22nd of August, 1881, when the Act passed, and the 1st of January, 1883, when the Act came into operation? He was not a "present tenant," and would be unable to get the benefit of the section. If he were a tenant who was evicted after the gale days in March or May, 1881, his six months for redemption did not expire until after the passage of the Act of 1881. The case of such a tenant was left entirely unprovided for, and it appeared to him that there must be large classes of tenants under disabilities of this kind. The Government said that leaseholders whose leases were determined before the passing of the Act of 1887 were to be reinstated. But how did the section affect leaseholders whose leases expired subsequently to the Act of 1887? He could not see that it affected them at all. It seemed to him, therefore, that the leaseholder who was evicted subsequently to the Act of 1887 was in a worse position than the leaseholder who was evicted before the passing of that Act. There was no way out of the awful bog into which the Committee had got with reference to this section except by saying that the order of the Arbitrators should specify the status into which the tenant should be reinstated, having regard to the status at the time of the eviction as to the Acts which had subsequently been passed. He quite agreed that the question presented the most enormous difficulties, and that he did not see how it could be dealt with in any short or pithy phrase. The whole case required to be examined with microscopic minuteness, and he trusted that the Government would be able to give such an examination to it.

Mr. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said, it ought to be made clear beyond the possibility of doubt that every tenant reinstated should have the right to the fixing of a fair rent.

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought the introduction of the word "now," as proposed by the Solicitor General, would have no operative effect at all. Again and again he and his colleagues had pointed out that the tenancy determined was not a present tenancy, either in the case of tenants from year to year before the Act of 1881 or in the case of leaseholders before the Act of 1887, and unless words were inserted explicitly declaring that a man should on reinstatement have the same right to the fixing of a fair rent that he would have had if he had continued in his farm until a present tenancy was acquired doubts and difficulties would be raised. No harm could be done by adopting the course he had suggested. The fair rent would be the fair rent, and the man would be in the same legal position as if he had not been evicted.

Sir J. RIGBY said, there were two classes of tenants only they had to deal with in this matter—those whose tenancies were determined before the Act of 1881 and those leaseholders whose leases were determined before the Act of 1887. Those tenants were expressly mentioned in the clause, and, whatever the subtlety of the Land Commission might be, they would be bound to recognise that it was the intention of the Legislature that those tenants should have the benefit of application for fair rent. Assuming, however, that the language adopted by the Government was not the most apt, it would be beyond his powers, in the midst of such a discussion, with suggestions being made all round, to draft on the spur of the moment a new clause which should be satisfactory. But there would be opportunities of dealing with the point in another place, and before that time arrived the Government would reconsider the matter. He presumed that the intention of hon. Members opposite and of the Government was exactly the same—namely, to give the best possible form to the clause. He must deprecate any attempt to redraft the clause now, and he hoped, after what he had said, no further Amendments to it would be moved.

Sir R. T. REID said, he thought that in the circumstances it would be better not to insert the word "now," and he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Mr. J. Morley, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Clause 1, page 2, line 23, leave out "such a tenancy," and insert "a tenancy of the same kind as the tenancy determined."

Clause 4, page 4, line 20, after "holding," insert "or the inability of the petitioner to acquire seed."

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 24, after the word "Act," to insert the words—

"Where the new tenant objects to an order for reinstatement the Arbitrators may, upon all claims on the holding being renounced by the former tenant, award to him, out of the moneys at their disposal for the purposes of this Act, such sums as they deem reasonable, not exceeding the sums which in their opinion might have been payable out of the said funds in respect of the said holding if the order for reinstatement had been made."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. T. M. HEALY moved to amend the Amendment by inserting, after the word "reinstatement" in the first line, the words "or the former tenant agrees to accept a sum in lieu of reinstatement." The object of the Amendment was to restore social peace in Ireland. There were not many cases of the kind he sought to meet by his Amendment, but there might be a few, in which the former tenant might have set up in business at a considerable distance from the holding, have formed new relations, and might be willing to give up the goodwill of the holding on receiving a certain sum. Something ought to be given to a former tenant for his goodwill even if he was not anxious to return to his old holding.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 1, after the word "reinstatement," to insert the words "or the former tenant agrees to accept a sum in lieu of reinstatement."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the proposed Amendment."

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought the new clause brought forward by the Chief Secretary fell far short of the case which had been made out in Committee when the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) was withdrawn. In the clause as it stood the old tenant would not be entitled to any compensation unless he presented a petition. Did the Government intend to drive the old tenant into presenting a petition where there was a new tenant on the farm? Why should not the old tenant have his grant just as well where the landlord was in occupation as where there was a new tenant in occupation? His improvements and tenant-right existed in the one case just as much as in the other, and he had as good a claim in the one case as in the other. He would suggest that the tenant should be compensated where there was no new tenant in occupation, and where the landlord himself objected, just as much as if a new tenant was actually in occupation.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, he must confess that he could not see his way to supporting the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, because he believed it would be productive of much mischief. The sum which was to be placed at the disposal of the Arbitrators was limited in amount. The suggestion now was that collusion should take place between the new tenant or the man who had grabbed the farm and the former tenant who did not wish to return to his farm, and that they should make a bargain to draw a certain amount from public funds. The money should be husbanded as much as possible in order that pressing cases might be dealt with satisfactorily. The cases of former tenants who had practically relinquished their claims to their old farms, who failed to present petitions, and who had started in business in new localities, could not be very pressing. He must oppose the Amendment.

Sir R. T. REID was understood to say that the Amendment of the Government was intended to benefit former tenants who were anxious to be reinstated but whose wishes were frustrated by the opposition of the tenants in possession. The hon. Member for North Kerry asked why the same benefit was not to be given to a former tenant of a holding of which the landlord remained in occupation. The reason was that where the landlord was in occupation the Arbitrators might in their discretion compel him to surrender the farm. In such cases, therefore, there was no reason for giving the tenant anything in the nature of a compassionate allowance.

Mr. SEXTON: Does it not seem rather hard that in some cases where the landlord is in occupation of the farm the former tenant can neither get back nor get compensation?

Sir R. T. REID said, it must be remembered that the Arbitrators would exercise discretion. In all deserving cases he trusted that they would make orders for reinstatement. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member would extend the benefit of his right hon. Friend's Amendment to former tenants who did not think proper to take any preliminary steps for the purpose of ascertaining whether the occupying tenants were willing to go out or not. The purpose of this Bill, however, was not to provide compensation for people who could go back to their holdings but refrained from doing so, or who were not prepared to appear before the Arbitrators. Under the proposal of the hon. Member a tenant who had been evicted 10 years ago who had got over his misfortunes, and was engaged in other business, might come back and put in a claim for compensation. The fund available under the Bill was a limited one, and it was absolutely necessary to expend it with some regard to economy. If the Government were to accept an Amendment of this character it would drain resources which might be most precious for the purpose of restoring tenants who were really anxious to get back to their holdings. If the resources had been unlimited they might then have been able to be lavish and generous all round. Although the sum was supposed to be sufficient, it was still limited in amount, and it was all the more necessary, therefore, that they should be careful how they expended it. Hon. Members for Ireland had put suggestions on the Paper which had resulted in the new clauses of the Government being put down, and he felt the Government had gone as far as they possibly could in the direction indicated by those suggestions.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. SEXTON said, he desired to move another Amendment to the clause. It was after the word "reinstatement," to insert the words

"or where the Arbitrators, after hearing the parties under Section 1 of this Act, dismiss a petition for reinstatement."

He could not for a moment admit that the evicted tenant had a worse claim for compensation or was less in need of it where there was no new tenant in possession than where there was a new tenant. The evicted tenant had suffered the same hardship and lost the same property in each case. The tenant owned the buildings and other improvements on the farm; he owned the tenant-right and he had lost his improvements and his tenant-right by the fact of his eviction. This tenant was equally penniless with the tenant who was replaced by a new tenant. The position of the two was in no respect dissimilar, and both were equally in need of help. He could not, therefore, admit that the circumstances that where there was a new tenant in the farm should be decisive against him. They had already provided that where there was a new tenant who declined to let the old tenant get back the old tenant might get a farm in some other locality, but they had declined to make any provision for the tenant where the farm was in possession of the landlord. They were now determined to give him no compensation whatever, when they decided that the landlord was to hold the farm. The Solicitor General had ignored the suggestion that the Arbitrators might refuse to reinstate the tenant for some cause not reflecting on the tenant in the least degree. The landlord might say he had made improvements; that he was not willing to surrender the farm; that he had converted it into a home farm, and any one of these reasons might operate to induce the Arbitrators to refuse the order of reinstatement. Could it be suggested in such a case that the Arbitrators ought not to have power to make some compensation in cases where they would not make an order for reinstatement for reasons personal to the landlord and not personal to the tenant? In such a case the tenant would neither have a chance of getting a single acre of land elsewhere or a single farthing of compensation. He would urge the Government not to ignore such cases, but to make provision that a tenant in such circumstances might receive some compensation. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 1, after the word "reinstatement," to insert the words—

"or where the Arbitrators, after hearing the parties under Section 1 of this Act, dismiss a petition for reinstatement."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the proposed Amendment."

Mr. BODKIN desired to suggest one answer to the difficulty which had been pointed out by the Solicitor General. The hon. and learned Gentleman had said that in one case there was compulsion, and in the other there was none; that in one case the tribunal was powerless to let a man go back into his holding, and in the other case, that though it was in their power to admit him, they decided not to do so, and that in making such a decision, the Arbitrators had in effect decided it was not a meritorious case. The hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Sexton) had met that point, and had shown that there were many such meritorious cases. They were not asking that there should be any compulsion put upon the tribunal to give compensation, but the same tribunal had had all the cases before it, it had knowledge of all the circumstances, and knew whether the tenant's claim was meritorious or not, and it would be only where the tribunal decided that the tenant's claim was in itself meritorious that it would be likely to put this compensation clause in force.

Sir R. T. REID said, it was distasteful to him in a Bill which related to Ireland and to Irish affairs not to be able to accept the Amendment suggested by the Irish Members. He knew perfectly well they were more conversant with Irish affairs than he himself or his friends who sat beside him, but he would ask hon. Members to be good enough to remember that the Government was limited by considerations of economy; they could not make the money go any farther than it would go, and what they had got to do was to deal with the £250,000 to the best advantage. He thought they had endeavoured to do so within the Bill as originally laid down. In this particular Amendment they had gone somewhat beyond the original scope of the Bill for the purpose of complying as far as possible with the valuable suggestions of hon. Members. And now the question arose whether, having gone one step, they should not go another step. He thought if the Amendment were adopted it would not apply to one case in a hundred.

Mr. SEXTON: Very well; if there was only one case out of a hundred it would not cost so much money.

Sir R. T. REID said, he thought that the provisions which the Government proposed would be found to deal satisfactorily with the question.

Mr. T. M. HEALY thought it would be possible to overcome the Solicitor General's argument as to economy being necessary by the use of the words—

"Such cases to be dealt with if there should be any surplus money."

Let economy be practised, and then if any money was left it could be used as proposed in the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Kerry. Undoubtedly there would be cases to be met such as that put forward by the hon. and learned Member for Dublin University (Mr. Carson), who had instanced the case of a landlady who had spent a considerable sum of money on an evicted holding, and asked in such a case would the Arbitrators make an order for the reinstatement of the old tenant? Probably they would not; but would that be any reason why an evicted tenant who had been evicted for a year's rent should get nothing at all? The state of the law was wholly inequitable. It was English law, and English law wholly, that a man should lose his whole possessions because of one year's arrear of rent. The tenant had a much larger property in the holding than a year's rent. It might be that he had £1,000 worth of property in his farm and the year's rent might be only £100. He might not be able to pay that; and under the conditions of English law, if he was not able to pay that at the proper time, he lost the whole of the £1,000 he had invested in the holding. It was very like the English view of Limited Liability Company law, and they were introducing that view to cases of land tenure where it was not applicable. In the old Land League days men were evicted for half a year's rent. Was the tenant who was evicted in such circumstances to get no compensation at all because the landlord had spent a sum of money on the holding which prevented the Arbitrators from making a reinstatement order? It seemed to him that such a tenant ought to get compensation, and he thought the Government should accept the Amendment.

Sir J. RIGBY said, the clause now being introduced by the Government had been drafted in order to meet the cases where it was thought possible there might be some hardship. They had tried to make the conditions as liberal as the circumstances would allow. They had met the case as far as the limited means at their disposal would permit them, and he would, therefore, suggest that the Amendment should be withdrawn.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 53; Noes 97.—(Division List, No. 210.)

Mr. T. M. HEALY moved an Amendment to the Amendment of the Chief Secretary, at the end of Clause 4, to substitute, after the words "such sums as they deem reasonable," the words "having regard to," instead of "not exceeding." He said, though a small alteration, it was important for the proper working of the clause.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 4, to leave out the words "not exceeding," and insert the words "having regard to."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'not exceeding' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir J. RIGBY said, the Amendment could not be accepted as proposed by the hon. Member, as it would leave the sum to be awarded to the old tenant without limit. That would undoubtedly be the interpretation put upon it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY did not like to press the matter again, but the hon. and learned Gentleman had interpreted the Amendment in a sense which he had no wish to put upon it. He wished to give a certain elasticity to the words and a discretion to the Arbitrators. He trusted the Government would not tie them down to a hard-and-fast sum.

Sir J. RIGBY repeated that the Amendment could not be accepted.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. SEXTON moved a further Amendment to the Amendment of the Chief Secretary by omitting the words "out of the said fund." The Bill provided for payment of a sum not exceeding two years' rent. If payment was to be made out of the fund he was afraid that under the Chief Secretary's Amendment as it stood the old tenant might get nothing. It was in the hands of the Arbitrators to award two years' rent, and the tenant would only have to pay one, so that if the award was £100 the fund would only pay £50. The new tenant and the landlord would have to get twice as much as the old tenant would get. The sum total would not be very large in these cases, but something should be done where the old tenant was kept out by the refusal of the new tenant to let him in, and certainly as much should be paid to the old tenant as they would pay to the new tenant and landlord. Several Amendments to this effect had been already proposed, and as this was the last he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would regard it with more consideration.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 5, to leave out the words "out of the said funds."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Sir R. T. REID said, the objection to the Amendment was that if it were accepted the fund, in case of the new tenant objecting to an order for reinstatement, might have to bear a greater burden than if the old tenant were reinstated. That would be the effect if he rightly understood the Amendment. The Arbitrators might award such sum as they thought fit not exceeding the sum which they considered might have been payable in respect of the whole interest, and the fund under this new section would have to bear a larger burden. That was what it came to. It was not easy to make such an alteration without destroying the object of the clause. Probably the hon. Gentleman would not press his Amendment, as he would no doubt see that the clause would meet his views.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, that the compensation payable to the old tenant ought to be contributed to both by the landlord and by the new tenant who was in possession of the old tenant's holding, and not only out of the fund to be provided under this Bill. As to that, there could be no dispute either in the case of the new tenant who was, even to some extent, in possession of the holding, or in the case of the landlord, who, by increased rent or otherwise, would gain an advantage. He would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that if he was only going to offer to the former tenant the very inadequate provision in the shape of compensation given by this Bill, he would leave the question unsettled as far as the man himself was concerned, and also in the public opinion of the district. It would be thought that he had not received compensation for his interest in the holding. His hon. Friend had endeavoured to introduce an Amendment with the consent of the Government that the Arbitrators should consider the whole equity of the case, and decide what sum should be contributed by the new tenant in possession of the former tenant-right, and what contribution should be made by the landlord. That was a matter where considerations of economy would not come in. A wide discretion was left to the Arbitrators, and it was only fair and reasonable that the new tenant and the landlord should themselves make some contribution, and by so doing have the means of coming to a friendly settlement with the old tenant, by giving him compensation for what he had lost. It was only by such means that a settlement could be arrived at.

Mr. BODKIN said, the question to be considered was whether the evicted tenant was not entitled under the moralities and necessities of the case to get as much money as it was proposed to allot to the new tenant and to the landlord. All they asked was that the old tenants should be treated in the same spirit, and that the money awarded to them under the Bill should be really assured. It was for that reason that this proposal was made for securing the compensation, for it would be a matter of compensation in a great many cases. Their case in common was that no compensation which could be given from the general fund would be of much value to the tenant. He asked the Government to make this small concession on the ground that the old tenants should have the same consideration as the new tenants.

Sir J. RIGBY said, the point had been already discussed on previous proposals, and the Amendment could not be accepted.

Question put, and agreed to.

***Mr. HAYDEN** (Roscommon, S.) moved to amend the Chief Secretary's Amendment by adding at the end the words—

> "And such further sums payable by the landlord and the new tenant as then find the difference between the former sums and the market value of the holding."

He thought the Government would not object to this, as the money was proposed to be paid not out of the sum voted by Parliament, but out of the money found by the landlord and new tenant. He would give an instance of what was intended. In 1885 the tenant was evicted for a single year's rent, and had been eight years out of his holding. His land had been grabbed within the last year, yet if the new tenant refused his consent, under the Bill the man would lose all right in the holding in which he had a considerable property, and the grabber have to pay nothing for the valuable interest he acquired. In those circumstances it was only fair that against both the new tenant himself and his landlord, who had derived very substantial benefit, compensation should be awarded not exceeding the market value of the holding. If this Amendment were not inserted a very serious difficulty might turn out in working the Act.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, at the end thereof, to add the words—

"And such further sums payable by the landlord and new tenant as they would find to be the difference between such former sums and the market value of the holding previous to the evictions."—(*Mr. Hayden.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be added to the proposed Amendment."

Mr. HARRINGTON said, this was practically the same Amendment as that upon which he addressed the House, and received a promise at an earlier stage that it would have favourable consideration. The great difficulty which the House had to deal with lay in the fact that there was no adequate compensation provided in cases where new tenants were in possession. He asked the English Members of the House to consider the peculiarities of the land system in Ireland, where it was not strictly the case of landlord and tenant as in this country, but was practically the case of two men in partnership, each having an undivided moiety of the holding. A tenant, the value of whose holding had been fixed by the Land Commission at £500, might have been evicted for one year's judicially fixed rent of £50. How, in such circumstances, were the Government to uphold a policy of this kind, and how were they to devise an equitable scheme if they would not compel the landlord and the new tenant in possession to contribute compensation for the man's tenant right? The Government were not going to give him a penny of compensation as far as the new tenant was concerned. The present proposal would not impose any new burden on the State, and did not introduce any new principle which was not already to be found in all the Irish Land Acts—namely, the right to go to the Court and obtain compensation. If the former tenant had a valuable interest in the holding, it was a grievous hardship to allow the new tenant, who was now in possession, to enjoy the benefit of that interest for nothing at all, without making him contribute one penny, and only to award to the former tenant the very inadequate compensation afforded by the Bill.

Sir R. T. REID said, he was very sorry the Government could not accept the Amendment. He would ask any hon. Member whether it would be possible for the Government fairly, or, he might almost say, equitably, towards the House of Commons, to accept an Amendment of this character. It was perfectly true that the spirit of the Irish Land Acts was that although the tenant might be dispossessed for a particular reason he was to be recouped the value of his holding in one way or another. That principle had been adopted in the more recent Irish land legislation. The Bill proposed reinstatement, and the hon. Gentleman proposed that, where the Bill itself admitted to the old tenant the option of not being reinstated, a pecuniary penalty should be awarded to him. This would be imposing on the new tenant compulsion, by ordering the payment by him of a sum of money. He was certain that this would be admitted to be entirely contrary to the principle upon which the Bill had been argued throughout from the Government Benches.

Mr. HARRINGTON said, that every one on the Irish Benches was under the impression that the present Amendment was, in substance, accepted by the Government on a former occasion.

Sir R. T. REID said, that was not, in fact, the case.

Mr. J. REDMOND (Waterford) desired to add to what his hon. Friend had stated, that an Amendment proposed in Committee had been withdrawn on the understanding that something of the kind would be considered on Report—that the Government would consider whether it was not possible for them to bring forward a clause embodying this proposal.

Sir R. T. REID said, that he was able to correct the hon. Gentleman's recollection, as he was present the whole time.

Mr. J. REDMOND: So was I.

Sir R. T. REID said, he certainly never understood his right hon. Friend to say that he would adopt that principle.

Mr. J. REDMOND said, the right hon. Gentleman certainly said he would consider it.

Sir R. T. REID thought the hon. Member would see that his right hon. Friend had felt, after consideration, that it would not be right in accordance with the principle of this Bill to accept the Amendment. His right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary assured him that he had expressly refused to give any pledge on the subject. Hon. Gentlemen would, he thought, see that it would not be right to accept the Amendment before the House.

DR. KENNY (Dublin, College Green) said, that his recollection tallied with that of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Waterford. If the Government accepted the Amendment they would be going a long way towards the completion of their own work, by assuaging the bitterness of feeling which threatened law and order in Ireland as long as these men remained evicted in the neighbourhood of their former holdings. By giving the evicted tenant, who remained near his farm, no means of migrating they bound him to the place where, according to the theory of the Government, his presence was most objectionable and a standing menace to the peace of the country. But by accepting the Amendment the Government would assuage a great deal of the bitterness which would be aroused in regard to the new tenant who would not give up the farm, by enabling the old tenant to go out of the district. He, therefore, appealed to the Government, in the interest of the success of their policy with regard to the evicted tenants, to accept the Amendment.

MR. HAYDEN said, he moved a similar Amendment in Committee on Thursday, but withdrew it on a promise from the Chief Secretary that it would be favourably considered before Report.

MR. J. MORLEY said, he stated explicitly on that occasion that the Government could not accept the Amendment.

MR. SEXTON said, the Nationalist Members could not, by any action of theirs, suffer it to be supposed that they consented to the transfer of the property of the evicted tenants either to the landlords or the new tenants. The evicted tenants owed, on the average, two or three years' rent. By reason of their eviction they lost, and either the landlords or the new tenants had appropriated, property valued from 10 or 12 to 20 years' purchase of the land. That property once legally belonged to the evicted tenant; it still in equity belonged to him; and the Nationalist Members could not allow it to be supposed that by any arrangement under the law the landlord or new tenant should be placed in a better position with regard to the transfer of that property than they were at the present moment. Recognising the equity of the Amendment—though, perhaps, it was not in the best form—if the right hon. Gentleman went to a Division he would feel bound to support him.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 52; Noes 94.—(Division List, No. 211.)

Words inserted.

On Motion of Mr. J. MORLEY, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 5, line 25, leave out "shall," and insert "may."

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 25, after the word "employ," to insert the words "such of the."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. T. M. HEALY said, the Chief Secretary had promised to insert words which would cover the value of the County Courts, as well as the valuers of the Land Commission.

MR. J. MORLEY said, there were no County Court valuers as such. All the valuers were valuers of the Land Commission.

MR. SEXTON said, the valuers employed by the County Courts were selected from a list supplied by the Land Commission. The Land Commission had no more to do with those valuers than to put them on the list. They were selected by the Judges of the County Courts; and it was extremely doubtful that the words would cover the case of those County Court valuers.

MR. J. MORLEY said, he thought there could be no question that they were not valuers of the County Courts, but valuers of the Land Commission; and the words he proposed were the best words he could devise to carry out his undertaking to his hon. and learned Friend.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Mr. J. MORLEY, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 5, line 25, after "Commission," insert "as they think fit."

MR. T. M. HEALY proposed an Amendment in Clause 8, providing that a holding sub-let or sub-divided at the time the tenancy was determined shall not be excluded under the Act. The Government had provided in the Bill that the words holding and tenancy and fair rent should have the same meaning as in the Act of 1881. This Amendment simply provided that sub-letting should not be a bar to reinstatement, and he could see no reason why the Government should not accept it.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 15, after "1881," to insert the words—

> "Provided that the fact that a holding was sub-let or sub-divided at the time the tenancy was determined, shall not be held to be an objection to a petition or an order under this Act."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir R. T. REID thought the Amendment wholly unnecessary. The point was whether sub-tenancies existing upon a holding at the time the tenancy was determined would prevent the holding from being one to which the Act would be applicable. He thought the opening words of the Act, which provided that the Act should apply to any holding whether agricultural or pastoral, or partly agricultural and partly pastoral, were amply sufficient to cover the point raised, and he hoped his hon. and learned Friend would not press the Amendment.

Mr. SEXTON said, no doubt the provision sought to be introduced by the Amendment was already in the Bill, but the insertion of the Amendment would make it clearer and the administration of the Act on the point more certain. The difficulty would not arise as to whether a holding was pastoral or otherwise; but when the question of the fixing of a fair rent came to be considered, of course, as it was not proposed now to alter the law with regard to the right of a tenant to have a fair rent fixed, the tenant could not get a fair rent unless he was entitled; but lest any doubt might arise as to the admissibility of a holding because sub-letting existed, he thought it would be well if the Amendment were inserted.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he could not agree with the Solicitor General's view on this point. He was familiar with the law in relation to this matter, and he was of opinion that if the Amendment were not inserted there would be a blot in the Bill.

Question put, and negatived.

Schedule.

Mr. T. M. HEALY pointed out the Schedule did not incorporate Section 59 of the Act of 1870, and he moved to insert this section.

Amendment agreed to; Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 124.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 3rd August.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 14, after the word "shall," to insert the words "half-yearly."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'half-yearly' be there inserted."

Mr. BARTLEY said, he did not know whether or not the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board accepted this Amendment, which would, he thought, make the clause somewhat clearer.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central) said, he did not think the Amendment at all necessary.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BOUSFIELD said, he had the following Amendment on the Paper:—

> Page 1, line 17, leave out from the beginning to "that," in line 21, and insert—
>
> "The grant due from that one-half of the fund to each parish shall be determined by three Arbitrators to be appointed by the Local Government Board, who shall apportion the amount of half the Equalisation Fund among the sanitary districts.
>
> In making such apportionment the Arbitrators shall have regard to the following considerations:—
>
> (a) the population of each district;
>
> (b) the rate in the pound required in each district in order to provide the amount expended in each district for the purposes hereinafter mentioned;
>
> (c) such other matters as are in the opinion of the Arbitrators necessary to be considered in order to enable them to carry out the object of this Act.

Where a sanitary district comprises two or more parishes, the Arbitrators shall divide the grant due among those parishes, and in making such division shall have regard to the same considerations as are mentioned in the preceding sub-section with reference to apportionment.

Provided nevertheless that."

He was aware that this Amendment was no longer in Order, the Committee having decided that the London County Council should determine the grant due in some form or another. As the Bill stood, the proportion of the distribution was a mere matter of arithmetic, as the authorities were directed to apportion the fund on the basis of population. The object of the Amendment was to provide that the grant should be determined not in proportion to population, but in such proportion as might be fixed by three Arbitrators to be appointed by the Local Government Board. No doubt the population plan was a rough-and-ready method, which might, in the majority of cases, be found to work out with more or less fairness. But there were a few parishes in which it was certain, at any rate, that under this plan injustice would be done. He submitted that as it could be shown that in one case, at least, the theory failed to secure justice, that was *primâ facie* evidence that the theory itself was faulty, and should not, therefore, be adopted by the Government as the basis on which the fund was to be distributed. In support of this argument, he would remind the Committee that for many years the corpuscular theory of light was accepted, but it was subsequently discovered that one fact would not fit in with the others, so that the whole theory was discarded as unsound. In the same way in regard to equalisation, if it broke down in one parish, or inflicted injustice, it showed that after all they had not got hold of the right theory. One important factor in dealing with equalisation had been left untouched by the Government. In the distribution of the fund no regard whatever was paid to the different needs and requirements of the parishes that were to receive it. That lay at the root of the whole thing. If the population proportion worked out without doing injustice it would not much matter, even if it were not absolutely correct; but if it was not correct, they must find out the cause. If they were going to equalise the rates, they must take into account what the existing rates were in any parish or district, for they would be distinctly the measure of its requirements. They must take the various factors into consideration and work out a formula which would have the effect of introducing them. No one on the other side had suggested such a formula. They did not intend to do so. Then he ventured to suggest that the only way of distributing the money so as to bring about an equalisation of rates in the several districts was to leave the matter in the hands of Arbitrators to be appointed by the Local Government Board. That was the suggestion he put before the Committee to-night. Anyone who read the Amendment as it originally stood would see that one of the factors he proposed the Arbitrators should consider was population. The next factor was one which obviously should be brought in—namely, the rate in the £1 required in each district in order to provide the amount expended in each district for the purposes of the Act. Then, if justice was to be done, they must bring into account other factors which could not be enumerated in the Bill without leading to great complexity, but which, in the opinion of the Arbitrators, it might be necessary to consider, and which every sensible man who made such an apportionment would consider. One was the question of compounding, which made the rates appear in some parishes 1s. in the £1 higher than they actually were. If they were going to equalise, they must start not with the nominal rate as it appeared in each parish, but with the actual amount. As he had said over and over again, to decide the question of distribution on the mere basis of population could not possibly meet the justice of the case. It had been shown, and practically admitted, that, taking the basis of population in the case of Kensington and Islington, the principle of the Bill broke down. But there were far worse cases than that. St. George's-in-the-East and Bermondsey were both poor districts. The rates in the former parish were 5s. 5d. in the £1, and in the latter 7s. 4d., a difference of 1s. 11d. What would happen under the Bill? The district which had the lowest rate would get a reduction of 5 3-10d. in the £1, whilst Bermondsey would get a reduction of only 3 3-10d. Obviously, therefore, the principle broke down, and instead of equalising the rates it would make them more unequal, giving the poorest parish and the one with the highest rate the least amount of relief. If the House was to be content to pass these things by thinking it too late to discuss them, and that they should be content with the extremely rough test of population, so be it; it was not worth while to bother any more; but it was obvious that the principle of the Bill was not a sound principle. Though the right hon. Gentleman said, with some confidence, that on the whole the parishes that ought to receive would receive, and the parishes that ought to pay would pay, he had shown that the parishes which ought to receive most did not receive most. He would take the cases of St. George's, Southwark, and Bethnal Green, where the rates for 1892-3 were almost precisely equal, in the former parish being 6s. 7d. and in the latter 6s. 6¾d. in the £1. These two parishes were practically equal in their rates and in their poverty, and yet the Bill proposed to give to St. George's 4 2-10d., and to Bethnal Green 8 4-10d., or nearly double. Obviously that was not equalisation. It might be said, "But Bethnal Green is probably a poorer parish than St. George's, Southwark." That was no answer to the argument, because what they had to look at was the burden on the individual in each parish. Take a man living in a £20 house in St. George's, Southwark, and another in Bethnal Green. They were both, probably, of equal capacity to bear the burden, and if they were to equalise they ought, as far as possible, to make the burdens equal. Therefore, when they considered that the burdens were to measured in that way, and they were to have regard to persons equally rated with an equal capacity to bear the burden, it would be seen that to give one parish twice the relief of the other was not equalisation. If they were to do even rough justice the system proposed by the Government should not be adopted. He considered the best way to carry out a plan of equalisation was to allow the work of apportionment to be done by Arbitrators, who would have certain lines laid down on which they might proceed. The test of population was too rough if the proportions of population remained the same between Census and Census—from 1891 to 1901; but it was obvious that in 10 years there would be vast shiftings of population, and that the inequalities which existed now were likely to be much more magnified at the end of the double quinquennial period. For that reason the test of population, rough and uncertain as it was now, would get worse and worse as time went on. If his proposal were adopted the Arbitrators would have regard to shifting population. For these reasons he ventured to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, page 1, line 18, after the word "fund," to insert the words—

"In such proportion as may be fixed on by three Arbitrators to be appointed by the Local Government Board."—(*Mr. Bousfield.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that an analogous Amendment to this was discussed on Friday night, when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, stated on behalf of his friends that the proposal of submitting the whole question to three Arbitrators was one which they could not possibly accept. He did not think, therefore, that it was necessary for him to deal at length with the arguments of the hon. Member. It appeared to him that of all the alternatives suggested to that contained in the Bill this of leaving the matter to three Arbitrators was the very worst, because the Arbitrators were to determine absolutely at their own discretion——

MR. BOUSFIELD: The latter part of the Amendment is on the Paper.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I understood the hon. Member to say that he did not move the latter part.

MR. BOUSFIELD: I intend, if this principle is accepted, to move the latter part of the Amendment which gives directions to the Arbitrators.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member intended to move the latter part of the Amendment at some later stage. The Arbitrators were to act upon their own discretion subject to two or three directions which were not conclusive. The Amendment was one the

Government could not possibly accept. He admitted there were some anomalies, but they were not the result of the scheme. The parishes which would pay had an average rate of 5s. 1½d., and the effect of the Bill would be to bring them up to a little beyond 5s. 4d., whereas the average rates of the receiving parishes, which had been 6s. 3d., would be brought down to 6s. The difference between the two classes of parishes in the past had been 1s. 1d., but in the future it would only be 7d.

MR. GOSCHEN said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) was very glad to quote his opinion, but he should only quote it as far as it had been given. The point on which he differed from the hon. Member (Mr. Bousfield) was as to the Arbitrators. Beyond that he thought there was more force in the principle on which the right hon. Gentleman would justify equalisation than there was in the principle of the Bill. The hon. Member proposed—

> "In making such apportionment the Arbitrators shall have regard to the following considerations:—(a) the population of each district; (b) the rate in the pound required in each district in order to provide the amount expended in each district for the purposes hereinafter mentioned."

That was a legitimate test and standard to apply. The difficulty they on the Opposition side of the House had to encounter in amending the Bill was want of information from the Government. On that point he might have more to say as different Amendments came before them. Then the hon. Member proposed—

> "(c) Such other matters as are in the opinion of the Arbitrators necessary to be considered in order to enable them to carry out the object of this Act."

He was sure what was in the hon. Member's mind was the difficulty of finding a solution of the problem by any cut-and-dry method at all. The difficulty was to find the machinery to carry out the scheme, and with regard to this the Government had never attempted to meet the objections raised. The principles which had been laid down by his hon. and learned Friend ought to have found their way into the Bill, which in removing some anomalies created others. He trusted, however, that his hon. and learned Friend would not think it necessary to divide the Committee, because he (Mr. Goschen) would not be able to support the proposal for the appointment of three Arbitrators. The hon. and learned Member, however, had done good service in calling attention to the fact that they could not decide a question of this kind by population alone.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK said that, so far from the average being 4s. 10½d., it was something like in some cases 5s. 6d. in the £1. The average rate in the City, he was assured, was 5s. 2d., and not 4s. 6d. The Government had given them very little information, and what little they had given was utterly irreconcilable with the statements of the Government. It was an extraordinary thing that in connection with a Bill dealing with such an enormous sum of money the Government should give them so little information. The statements they had made were not only not borne out by the information hon. Members possessed, but were irreconcilable with the facts laid before them. This was a most extraordinary mode of dealing with a very important question.

MR. BOUSFIELD desired to say that the argument drawn from averages failed when applied to a Bill of this sort, on which they were dealing with particular instances in order to equalise. Of course, they might take the rates of the whole of London and say, "The average is so much in the £1," but the object of equalisation was to pick out the high rates and the low ones and to try to equalise them. When the right hon. Gentleman said, "I average the half that pay and the half that receive," he was leaving out the factors to which they must have regard. Take the half that received. The right hon. Gentleman averaged it, but when they found that one parish received twice as much relief as another they could not help thinking that the scheme of equalisation was a bad one. With regard to the Amendment, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had not dealt with the principle of arbitration at all, but had gone off on the details of the proposal. If the principle had been accepted it would have been easy to agree as to the details.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

***Mr. KIMBER** (Wandsworth) said, the object of the next Amendment which stood in his name was to secure that those parishes or sanitary districts whose rates last year were above the average should alone be recipients this year of the Equalisation Fund. The avowed purpose of the Bill was to equalise rates, but if the Equalisation Fund were devoted to sanitary purposes in districts in which the sanitary rates were below the average the measure failed to achieve its ostensible object. He submitted that the fund should go to those districts whose rates were above the average, and not to those whose rates were below it. He could not conceive on what ground this Amendment could be criticised. The arguments advanced against the Amendment he moved when the Bill was last before the House were certainly not applicable to this. Probably the plea of extravagance would be again put forward, but that could better be dealt with later on when they came to deal with the question of controlling the expenditure of the money. At any rate, he could not imagine that any parish or sanitary district already overburdened with rates would have the effrontery to further force up its rates.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, after the words "sanitary districts," to insert the words—

"Whose total sanitary rates in the previous year shall exceed the average sanitary rates of all the parishes in London in that year, and in proportion to the amounts properly expended by such sanitary districts in the previous year for sanitary purposes in excess of such average rate."—(*Mr. Kimber.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, there was but little difference between this Amendment and the one the hon. Member moved on the previous Friday night, and in his opinion the same arguments applied to both. The Amendment if carried would prove a direct incentive to extravagance, because a parish whose average rate was below the average would be tempted to raise that rate in order to share in the Equalisation Fund. He therefore asked the House to reject the Amendment.

Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester) said, the right hon. Gentleman did not appear to have borne in mind the fact that the great object of the Bill was to improve the sanitation of London, and that the Amendment tended in that direction by securing that the fund should be applied to sanitary purposes.

Mr. GOSCHEN, on a point of Order, asked if the Amendment before the House were negatived it would preclude debate on that of the right hon Baronet's, the Member for London University, which sought to secure the addition of the following words:—

"Provided always that, unless the rates in a sanitary district shall on the average of the last three years have exceeded or fallen short of the average rate (hereinafter defined) by at least 6d. in the £1, such district and the parishes therein shall not be liable to contribute, or entitled to receive, any sum to or from the Equalisation Fund for the year?"

The CHAIRMAN: No; I think not.

Mr. KIMBER: Then I will ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Captain NAYLOR-LEYLAND: In the absence of the hon. Member for North Islington, I beg to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out from the word "districts," to end of sub-section (4) and insert—

"At their discretion with a view to equalise as far as possible the burden of local taxation in different parts of London, having regard nevertheless to the following considerations:—

(a) The amount of the local rates in each individual parish in relation to the average rates for the whole of London;

(b) The circumstances of the local rates in each parish, and whether they are especially high on account of some expenditure specially local and beneficial mainly to the individual parish;

(c) The relative number of ratepayers rated at £20 and under, excluding compound householders;

(d) The efficiency with which the rates are collected in the parish;

(e) The economy with which the rates are administered in the parish;

(f) The sanitary condition of the parish and the increased sanitary efficiency of the parish produced from year to year by the Equalisation Fund granted to that parish."—(*Captain Naylor-Leyland.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'in proportion to their population' stand part of the Clause."

MR. BARTLEY said, his Amendment laid down that this 6d. rate—as it might be roughly called—should be collected and distributed by the London County Council on certain definite principles. He was not known to be a strong supporter of the London County Council; he should have preferred that this fund should be distributed by the Local Government Board; but looking at the matter from a practical standpoint, and considering that they had got a London County Council established, it was reasonable that that body should have the distribution of the fund. He believed that if the administration of the fund were placed in the hands of the London County Council with definite principles—such as those in his Amendment—laid down for their guidance, they would administer it far fairly and more justly than it would be administered if any such haphazard mode, as a system of population—such as the Bill proposed—were adopted. He had gone with great attention and care into the way in which the Bill would work out, and he found that certain parishes would be very hardly hit, indeed; and although some of those parishes were small, it was no consolation to the individual, who was hardly pressed, that he belonged to a small parish. It had been his lot for many years to have to do with poorer persons in London; and he had no hesitation in saying that the rates pressed as hard on what might be called the thriving and well-to-do small men of the richer districts as on any persons in any other part of the Metropolis. He candidly admitted that he was unable to invent any system of distributing this money which would do equal justice to all the parishes. If a large sum of money were pressed on Islington, which he represented in the House, Islington, naturally, would be glad to accept it; but looking at London as a whole, there was no doubt that if there was a fair system—allowing for the good administration of the local affairs of Islington, which would fairly give them a lower rate than many other parishes—it was not reasonable that some other parish should pay them a large sum of money. He had always been a supporter of some fair system of the equalisation of rates; and he had always held that the present system was not fair. He was sorry that the Government had not accepted the Amendment which would confine this fund to the sanitary improvement of London, for if that had been done a great deal of the difficulty in connection with the Bill would have been got over. One of the great difficulties which those who desired to see London improved had to contend with was that population had a tendency to concentrate itself and become more dense in certain parts of London. In such parts as Bethnal Green and St. Giles, the very nature of the employment to be obtained there—the manufacture of small toys, for instance—tended to make them more congested; and as this Bill said to the parishes—"The more populous you are, the greater will be the benefit you will receive from this fund"—it would, of course, encourage the further concentration of population in those already too crowded portion of the Metropolis. This was not a Party question in any sense—it was above Party; and he thought it deplorable that while one of the great evils which those who had the well-being of London at heart tried to get rid of, was the dense concentration of population in certain parts of London, this Bill should directly encourage that concentration. In parishes where the population was already great, and which would get benefit from the Bill in the shape of reduced rates and reduced rents, the population would naturally have a tendency to become still more congested. He really thought, therefore, that the principle of the Bill, by which the fund was to be administered to the parishes according to their population was a very bad principle. His Amendment would hand over the administration of the fund to the London County Council, and lay down certain rules for their guidance. He could not see why the Government should oppose the Amendment. The London County Council was a body elected by the inhabitants of London; and although he had no great opinion of them, it seemed to him that if they were given some definite instructions—and he might say he was not unwilling to have his Amendment modified—they would make a more just division of the fund than could possibly be done under the accidental, dangerous, and most disastrous system proposed by the Bill.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the Amendment came very strangely from the hon. Member, for on Friday the hon. Member was not prepared to concede to the London County Council even the power of simply administering the fund.

MR. BARTLEY (interposing) said, he would very much rather that the Local Government Board should have the administration of the fund; but as his Amendment to that effect had not been accepted, he thought his present proposal was far better than the proposal in the Bill.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that was no answer to the argument. On Friday the hon. Member moved an Amendment which would deprive the London County Council of even the purely administrative duty of distributing the fund; and he now moved an Amendment in a directly opposite sense, for he proposed to give to the London County Council the widest possible discretion in the distribution of the whole of the 6d. rate, amounting to £800,000 amongst the various parishes. It was true the hon. Gentleman endeavoured to limit the discretion of the London County Council by laying down certain principles. But these principles were not binding legally. There was no obligation at law on the part of the London County Council to take those conditions into consideration. The Amendment merely submitted those conditions to the London County Council. Did the right hon. Gentleman think it right and reasonable to trust the London County Council with such a wide discretion? Nothing he had said in the past would give one the impression that he was prepared to trust the County Council in this matter, and he did not think the County Council would at all desire to have such a wide discretion left to them. It would be a most difficult duty to undertake without raising difficuties and endless opposition in every part of the Metropolis. There was no indication of the way the duty was to be performed. Under the Amendment it would be possible for the County Council to say that a 6d. rate should be levied in St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. James's, Westminster, and the whole of the proceeds distributed amongst the poor parishes. There was no local limitation on their discretion. He presumed the hon. Member intended to tack on to his proposal the further Amendment giving an appeal to the Local Government Board; but, again, there was no direction as to what principle the Local Government Board was to adopt in giving a decision upon the Bill. The Local Government Board might not assent to the settlement of the County Council and might redistribute the money. The result as it appeared to him would be that the Local Government Board would be flooded with appeals from the ratepayers, hundreds of whom would be dissatisfied; so that if the question were re-opened in respect of one parish it would be necessary to re-open similar questions in respect of all parishes. The result would be to give an endless amount of litigation to the Local Government Board to decide, ending in a state of affairs which would be absolutely intolerable. The fact was, the distribution under the proposal of the hon. Member would be so delicate and difficult that it should not be entrusted to any Local Authority. He could not conceive how hon. Gentlemen opposite who had not in the past shown much confidence in the County Council could propose to entrust to it a duty so onerous, delicate, and difficult. The right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, seemed to think that it was the duty of the Government to provide an alternative scheme.

MR. GOSCHEN: No, no.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the right hon. Gentleman had implied that the Government had not supplied the Opposition with sufficient information to enable them to adopt an alternative scheme. There had been several alternative schemes brought forward, some of which had been still-born, some of which had been discussed, and one of which was that before the Committee, and he ventured to say that every one was open to far more serious objections on the ground of grave inequalities of every kind than the proposal of the Government. The scheme at present before the

Committee sought to impose a dangerous and difficult task on the County Council which they had no desire to undertake, and which, if undertaken, they could not fulfil with satisfaction to the ratepayers of the Metropolis.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he would point out the position in which they were placed. The question as it was put from the Chair was——

"That the words 'in proportion to their population' stand part of the Clause."

That was the Question as against the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Islington. It was clear that if the Amendment of the hon. Member were to become the Main Question they would then be able to amend it; therefore, they had not got simply the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman before them, but an alternative which they could further discuss. If these words stood part of the Bill they would be precluded, so far as general principle was concerned, from moving any alternative scheme. Therefore, they had arrived at the point when they should consider whether they should accept the principle of compulsion. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had said that no alternative scheme had been proposed which would hold water. But the right hon. Gentleman's own scheme did not hold water. They could not help thinking that one scheme they had proposed would hold water, if the right hon. Gentleman had accepted the principle that it was sanitation the Committee ought principally to fix attention upon. If the proposal of the Opposition in that sense had been accepted, other proposals would have been submitted which in their results would have been infinitely more acceptable than the proposals of the Government.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he presumed that he might be allowed to state the case for the parish of St. John, Hampstead, in which he lived, and to explain the objection entertained by the Hampstead Parochial Authorities to the plan of distribution by population. The great parish of Hampstead was happily one of those that were rising rapidly, both in population and in rateable value. He observed that in each decade the parish rose about one-third in population and one-third in rateable value. The Parochial Authorities apprehended that this Bill would increase their burdens, and that when they came to pay the contribution that would be demanded from them under this Bill they would have to make an addition to their rates. They apprehended that this increased burden would become heavier during each year of the current decade. On the other hand, the only asset that could be set against this liability was the increase in their population. They would contribute upon rateable value and would receive upon population. But while their contribution would increase every year their asset would not go on increasing, because under one of the later provisions of the Bill the population upon which they would receive would not be the population of the year on which they paid, but the population of the last Census. The present decade was still comparatively young——

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Perhaps I may say that I propose at a future stage of the Bill to move an Amendment which will make the Census quinquennial, so as to avoid the long period of 10 years.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for this information, which raised a large question, which, of course, he should not be prepared to argue at that moment. A quinquennial Census for London would mitigate the objection he was stating—in fact, it would halve it. There was, however, still the objection that during the five years the parish would continue to receive upon the population indicated by the Census, whilst it would pay upon an increasing assessment. He should think that a quinquennial Census would be difficult to carry out, but, no doubt, it could be accomplished. He might be permitted to complete his argument, which was that year by year there would be perhaps an appreciable addition to the burdens of the parish without any corresponding addition to the assets. Nothing could remove this objection except the making of some annual estimate of population. He admitted that this was impossible, and therefore the plan adopted by the Government was very objectionable in the estimation of the authorities of the well-managed parish in which he lived. He was sure that there were no ratepayers who less deserved to have a burden put upon them than those amongst whom he lived, for there was no parish which did its duty better or whose affairs were better managed than that of Hampstead.

*MR. COHEN (Islington, E.) said, he did not know whether the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) would charge him as he had charged his hon. Friend (Mr. Bartley) with inconsistency, inasmuch as he had voted in favour of assigning to the London County Council the arithmetical duty of computing how much had to be paid by and to the various parts of London under the Bill, but he could not help expressing his extreme reluctance to vesting in the London County Council, of which he was privileged to be a member, the distribution of this money according to its discretion. He thought, nevertheless, that the Committee was indebted to his hon. Friend for having very laudably attempted to devise a plan which was not based upon population. If Members of the Committee had not been successful so far in devising any plan as an alternative to that of the Government, it must be borne in mind that they had not the information and resources at their command which the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre) possessed. He could not resist the belief that if the right hon. Gentleman had made all the use he could of his resources he would have been able to bring forward some better plan. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman had set his powerful mind to work to devise some other expedient, because the right hon. Gentleman seemed, on succeeding to the Office which he now adorned, to have taken over the absolute text of the Bill from his predecessor. If the resourceful mind of the right hon. Gentleman had been brought to bear upon improving the Bill, he (Mr. Cohen) thought that a far more satisfactory measure would have been produced. He certainly disapproved the principle of population. He believed it to be unjust, and he thought that if it were rejected by the Committee it would be possible to devise a plan which would be more satisfactory than that of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman, if he examined the Amendment, would see that it did not in any way touch the question of levying the rate. The Amendment did not affect in any way whatever the system on which the contributions of the various districts were to be raised.

MR. BARTLEY: It does not pretend to; it deals with the distribution.

MR. COHEN went on to say that in reference to this Amendment he was not swayed by any want of confidence in the London County Council. His reason for not desiring to leave this matter to the London County Council was that that body had, at any rate, as much, and in his judgment had more, work than they could adequately and efficiently discharge. To add this new duty to their work would be to impair the efficiency with which their present duties were discharged, and to strike another blow at localisation—at that home rule of which, under circumstances far less appropriate, the Government had avowed themselves the apostles. The result must be to add another reason to those which deterred from taking part in local administration those persons whom it ought to be the object of every wise system of local government to attract into the important and useful work of local government. He believed that if the Committee rejected the system of distribution according to population they would be able to devise a scheme of distribution which would have regard —first, to the needs; secondly, to the claims of the districts; and, thirdly, to the efficiency with which the grant was distributed. For these reasons he should vote without hesitation for the omission of the words of the Bill.

MR. FISHER (Fulham) said, he shared the view expressed by his hon. Friend who had just sat down, that population was a very false and erroneous basis of calculation to adopt in reference to the distribution of the grant. At the same time, if population was to be taken as the basis it was necessary to get the Population Returns fairly and approximately correct. Glaring as many of the inequalities and anomalies under this Bill undoubtedly were, he thought that one of the most glaring of them was to be found in the method of calculating population from the Returns of the last Census. Even the promise which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr.

Shaw-Lefevre) had given as to a quinquennial Census would not do substantial justice to his (Mr. Fisher's) constituents. The Bill made each parish contribute on its annual rateable value, whilst the grant was distributed according to the population as shown by the last Census. Fulham was probably the most rapidly growing part of the whole Metropolis. It had an enormous area still unbuilt over, and therefore from Census to Census for some time to come it must every year continue to show a great annual increase in its population. What would have been the result if the Bill had become law in the decade from 1880 to 1891? In 1880 the Census population of Fulham was 42,895 and the rateable value was £190,136. Year by year the rateable value went on increasing until in 1890 it was 385,407. If the Bill had been in force the parish would have had to pay upon this increasing rateable value, but it would have received each year of the decade upon the population of 42,895, although by 1891 the population had risen to 91,639, and had thus more than doubled. If the Bill had been in force since the Census of 1891 Fulham would have received its share of the grant upon the population of 91,639. The rateable value of Fulham, however, had gone up ever since 1891, when it was £426,551, and it was now £484,851, whilst the estimated population was now 108,000. The population was growing at such a rate that he regretted to say he fully contemplated that by the time we entered upon another century it would be very nearly 200,000. They would only be receiving a proportion according to the last Census which gave them a population of 91,000, and they were increasing at such an enormously rapid rate that a very great injustice would be done to his constituency if they were to be treated on the basis of population according to the last Census. He did not wish to go more fully into the matter, and he had made this statement now instead of upon his own Amendment, because the right hon. Gentleman interpolated the remark that he would propose that a quinqennial Census should be taken for the Metropolis. That would in a sense meet the injustice; though in fact, to calculate it upon 91,000, which was the population of his constituency at the last Census, would not be quite satisfactory, because the population would really be about 120,000. The only real way of meeting the injustice would be to have an annual estimate made of the population. There were so many anomalies and such injustice involved in this question that they ought to give up the idea of population as a basis of contribution. At all events, he thought he had made out a case that when the population was enormously growing, and must continue to enormously grow, the Bill would inflict great injustice.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, the discussions that had taken place last Friday, and again this evening, showed how much better it would have been if the Government had been satisfied with the Second Reading of the Bill and then referred it to a Select Committee. His right hon. Friend in charge of the Bill said this was a rough-and-ready measure of justice. He saw the roughness, but where the justice came in he could not see. They had had another discussion this evening, which showed how much more consideration this very little question deserved. He did not complain of the Government, as he admitted the perplexity of the question; but at the very last moment, without any warning, they were told they were to have a new Census for London every five years. Why was not that in the Bill? Because it was an afterthought, and what he wished to know was who was to pay the expenses?

The CHAIRMAN: I must draw the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact there is nothing of that in the Amendment.

Mr. FISHER: On a point of Order may I ask if we shall have an opportunity of discussing the question of the quinquennial Census?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: When the hon. Member moves his Amendment, I will state what the alternative scheme is which the Government propose. I mentioned it to show that we were ready to meet the views of the hon. Member.

Sir J. LUBBOCK said, he did not wish to discuss the question; he only wished to know who was to pay the expenses; because if London was to pay for it, then in the majority of the districts the Census would cost them more than they would receive under the Bill.

*Mr. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) wished to say a few words upon the rapid changes that took place in the population of various districts in London. The district he represented was totally different from that of his hon. Friend the Member for Fulham (Mr. Fisher). His was a railway district, and the Midland Railway had encroached in the district very much, a large number of small tenements having been pulled down, which had not been a benefit, but rather an injury to the locality, and the tradesmen in that part of the district were hardly able now to earn a living. There were also very rapid changes in London every year, and in one year Somers Town lost 7,000 or 8,000 of its inhabitants; therefore, he was glad to hear they were going to have a quinquennial Census, but he would point out that if they were going to have population as the basis of collection they should go closer than every five years. In another Bill that passed through the House the basis of population was taken. He could not refer to that Bill—the Parish Councils Bill—as it would be out of Order, but he might point out that in a village near Manchester, during the construction of the Ship Canal, the population was over 300, and this was the case when the Census was taken in 1890; yet now, owing to the completion of the Canal, there was only one solitary individual left in this heretofore village, who, according to Statute, would have to form himself into a Parish Council, as on the 1st of next January all districts which, according to the Census of 1890, had 300 inhabitants would have to do so. That was an instance which showed how rapidly in any particular district the population might change, and though in London the case might not be so gross, there were very great changes taking place. But further than that, this Bill only took into account the night population; and not only in the City but in Wapping, where there were chiefly wharves and warehouses, and in other parts of London, the night population was comparatively small, and in these cases, where so many of the population—as in the case about the docks—worked for so very poor a return, was it desirable to put on this additional tax? Another objection to the basis of population had been pointed out, and it was that in some cases the workhouses were not in the parishes to which they belonged, but the population of these workhouses would be counted in the population of the district in which the workhouses were situated. The right hon. Gentleman had taunted them with not producing another alternative; but there was the alternative of the Municipal Common Poor Fund, and many others which he believed would work very much better and more fairly than the very rough and, as he thought, unworkable proposal contained in the Bill, where the only basis was that of population.

*Mr. WHITMORE (Chelsea) said, he wished to know how the right hon. Gentleman proposed to carry out the important proposal contained in the statement he had made. The great argument against the present Amendment used by the right hon. Gentleman was that he would mitigate the injustice of the Bill by proposing for London that in future there should be a Census taken every five years, and he wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to insert clauses in the Bill that would give effect to that proposal? He did not think he should be out of Order in saying that he happened to be a Member of the last Census Committee, which recommended a Quinquennial Census throughout England. The last Government would not assent to that proposal, which he knew could only have been carried out by a Quinquennial Census Bill. Every Census, as he was aware, involved a considerable expenditure of public money.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

*Mr. WHITMORE said, he would not proceed further with that, but would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed to include in the Bill clauses that would provide for the taking of a Quinquennial Census? If he did, he thought the right hon. Gentleman would, by that proposal, add enormously to the difficulty of getting this Bill through the House.

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) said, the right hon. Gentleman was determined to stick to the sham title of equalisation of the rates, and seemed determined to resist every attempt made from that side of the House to give some verisimilitude to the title. The right hon. Gentleman rejected the opportunity provided by this Amendment of, to some extent, equalising the rates of London in connection with this Bill, and insisted upon his method of distribution according to population. If they were to have that method, as the Debate upon this Amendment had practically been turned into a Census Debate, it seemed to him absolutely essential that they should have a yearly Census, and that that Census should be taken according to the option of Local Authorities in particular districts. It was the mode, apparently, to speak of one's own constituency, and, therefore, he might be permitted to speak of his, and to instance the fact that in Westminster at least they had to sanitate for the day population, they had to sanitate for the maximum population, and the difference between the day and night population of Westminster was 100 per cent. It seemed to him that if this standard of population was adopted for the distribution of the fund, at least every effort should be made to form an accurate estimate of the population for whom the sanitation was to be carried out. The most striking instance of the rapid increase of a population would be afforded by the conversion of the site of Millbank Prison into lodging houses, which would, in the course of a few months, increase the population of Westminster by some 4,000 souls. It seemed to him that for Westminster to be deprived of the rights which it would have under this Bill, owing to its increase of population, for four or five years, and at the same time, owing to its increase of rating, to have to contribute an increased sum to the fund, was one of the most glaring instances of the injustice of this Bill could be found.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) wished to ask whether it would not be possible to have these calculations made by some responsible body like the Local Government Board? As the Bill stood it was full of anomalies. For instance, his own parish received 7½d., whereas the parish represented by his right hon. Friend who represented Poplar received 11⅓d., Limehouse and Shadwell received 9d., whilst Mile End Old Town only received 7¼d., and St. George's-in-the-East only received 5¼d. These showed there must be something radically wrong in the way these amounts had been calculated, and if they put it into the hands of a responsible body like the Local Government Board they would be distributed in a way that would give greater satisfaction, and would be more in accordance with an equalisation of the rates. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider the question and see how necessary it was to adopt some plan that would give a greater degree of satisfaction.

*__Mr. KIMBER__ (Wandsworth) said, he thought they had arrived now at an Amendment that was the very *crux* of the Bill. Having decided that the contribution was to be 6d. in the £1 all round, according to the rateable value, and put into a common pot, the question was whether that should be distributed according to population? The question was not exactly the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Islington—that would be the second question put. As he understood it, the question would be whether the words "distributed according to the population" should stand part of the Bill? He took a few of the words that fell from the Minister in charge of the Bill as a test of his sincerity as to the grounds on which he intended to proceed. The right hon. Gentleman stated with great triumph that no one could agree with the alternative proposals made to those contained in the Bill, and that they all involved some defects or anomalies which were worse than the plan proposed by the Bill, and that the anomalies that would exist under the Bill were not the result of the scheme under the Bill, but would exist in spite of the scheme of the Bill. He was going to show the right hon. Gentleman that he was entirely wrong. The right hon. Gentleman did not seem to accept the truth of the statement he made the other night, and he was going to convince the right hon. Gentleman now with more correct data taken from two authorities that would be accepted as good foundation for his argument. One was from the return made by the London County Council of the ratings in all the parishes of London for the five years from 1889 to 1893 and the average of those ratings, and the other was the Parliamentary Return which was in the hands of hon. Members. As to the anomalies which existed under the Bill, and whether they were the result of the Bill or not, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to listen to this analysis of the rates on the average of five years in every parish in London. He would give the anomalies, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would find the two categories of them amounted to 39 distinct anomalies—divergences greater than now existed or would exist under any other plan. Though the right hon. Gentleman was fond of saying that if the Bill contained anomalies it did not contain so many as other plans, he had not pointed out yet a single anomaly in any of their suggestions. All the right hon. Gentleman had said was that the tendency would be so and so, and that to give money to any one would tend to extravagance. That might be so, but it was not an anomaly, and he was going to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the anomalies under the Bill, and caused by the Bill. There were three parishes in London whose average rate was 5s. 7d.—that was equality at present, but what was done with these three equal rates? Two of them were put down, and one was put up, so that positively these three which were equal before were made distinctly unequal, and the divergence between them was considerable. Take the next at 5s. 6d. At present there were four parishes rated at 5s. 6d. on the average of five years. These four were at present equal, but they would be made unequal, and the divergence created between them would reach as much as 9d. in the £1. Take 5s. 4d. There were eight parishes in London rated at present at 5s. 4d.—equality again. What did the Bill do with them? The effect was to put three of them up and five of them down, and the extreme divergence between them was nearly 9d. Take the next at 5s. 3d., at which rate there were three at present equal, and they were treated in this way: Two of them had to pay—that was to say, their rate was increased to 5s. 7d., and the other was put down to 5s. 2d. There were three other parishes that were at present equal at 5s. 2d., and one was made to pay nearly 4d. extra, another was put down 2½d., and the third was put down by 2d.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Is that on the average?

MR. KIMBER: Yes, the rate I am speaking of is the average of the rates for five years—from 1889 to 1893.

MR. LOUGH: Is it what you call the present rate?

MR. KIMBER: Yes, the present average.

MR. LOUGH: Then I would point out that it cannot be on the average if it is the present rate.

MR. KIMBER said, the hon. Member could make his answer presently. The strongest statement of all was that there were two parishes at present rated at 5s., one of which was put up and the other down. If they added these divergences together, they would find they were 28 in number, 28 divergences created by the Bill, and consequent upon the Bill and not existing in spite of the Bill. But that was not all. Taking the right hon. Gentleman's own way of putting it, the right hon. Gentleman said that the average of all London was supposed to be about 5s. 5d. He forgot whether the right hon. Gentleman said it was 5s. 5d. or 5s. 3d., but he would take him either way. Assuming it was 5s. 3d., the right hon. Gentleman said the effect of the Bill was that nearly all above the average received, and nearly all below paid. He ventured to contest that statement, and here were the figures. There were no less than six parishes above the average of 5s. 3d. at present on the average of five years which would under the Bill be called upon to pay more than at present. The hon. Member shook his head, but it was so. Taking the parishes below the average there were three that would receive. But if they took 5s. 5d. as the average there were three above who paid and eight below who received. These added 11 anomalies to the other 28, making 39, and he might go one and show that even where the rates were above 5s. 7d., although all the parishes received, they received in extremely unequal proportions. He would give the right hon. Gentleman one case of a great divergence. His own parish on the average of five years was rated at 5s. 10d.;

that was put down, and was entitled to receive 0·84, that was 4-5ths of a penny, but other parishes rated at 5s. 6d. or down as low as 5s., received a subsidy of from 2d. to 6d. in the £1. That showed that while the right hon. Gentleman was right in saying that parishes above the average received they did not receive in equitable proportions among themselves. Again, the parishes below the average paid in unfair and inequitable proportions. In the 28 cases he had stated to the Committee, and the names of which he could give if necessary, there was a distinct divergence instead of an approximation. He submitted the proper course for the Government to adopt in this case was to let the Bill stand over until an investigation could be made into the whole matter by some Committee or other Representative Body in order to ascertain what would be the fair principle for the distribution of this fund.

Mr. BOUSFIELD said that, having regard to the course the Debate had taken, he thought it well to suggest what he had intended to incorporate in a subsequent Amendment. He made the suggestion not in the hope that the Government would accept it now, but that they would between this and the Report stage give the matter their serious consideration. It had been pointed out that to take the simple basis of population as the basis of the division of this fund would work out manifest injustice in certain cases, and what he suggested was that, instead of population simply, they should take population and the sanitary rate jointly; that was to say, they should arrive at the proportion in each case by multiplying the population by the sanitary rate. [*Laughter.*] Just let him explain what the effect of that would be. In every case in which he had been able to examine what the effect was it had been to reduce the glaring inequalities which had been pointed out. The operation seemed to excite the merriment of the Government. He supposed they had made up their minds that whether taking the basis of population gave just results or not they would take it. But if it could be proved that a truer and better result was more equally arrived at by making the division according to the proportion of population and the sanitary rate jointly he did not see why the Government should ridicule the suggestion. It was quite obvious that the President of the Local Government Board was throwing as much ridicule as he could upon the suggestion without examining it or ascertaining how it would work out. Let him tell the right hon. Gentleman how it would work out in the three typical cases in which it had been shown that injustice would be done by the Bill. In the case of Islington and Kensington the proportions were determined by the figures 319,000 and 166,000; that was to say, Islington had a population of 319,000 and Kensington 166,000, the sanitary rates being 1s. 4d. and 1s. 5d. If they multiplied 319,000 by 16 in the case of Islington, and 166,000 by 17 in the case of Kensington, and took the product as the basis of their division instead of the simple numbers of the population, that would tend somewhat to reduce the amount given to Islington in the division, and increase the amount returned to Kensington. Take the other case of St. George's, Southwark, and Bethnal Green, where in 1892-3 the rates were almost exactly equal; but where, according to the Bill, they proposed to give to one parish double what was given to the other. The Bill proposed to divide in proportion between these two of 59,000 to 129,000 representing population. If they took the sanitary rate, which in one case was 2s. 2d. and in the other 2s. 1d., and multiplied 59,000 by 26 and 129,000 by 25, taking the product as the basis of the division, they would tend to reduce the inequality of 2 to 1 and make the two parishes more nearly alike. St. George's-in-the-East and Bermondsey were both poor parishes, the rates in the one being 5s. 5d., and in the other 7s. 4d. in the £1, and the Bill proposed to give the most highly-rated parish only $3\frac{3}{10}$d., and the more lowly-rated parish $5\frac{3}{10}$d. The sanitary rate in St. George's-in-the-East was 1s. 8d. in the £1, and in Bermondsey 2s. 3d. If they multiplied 45,000, the population of St. George's, by 20, and 84,000, the population of Bermondsey, by 27, the result would be instead of St. George's, which was the lowest rate, getting 5d. and Bermondsey getting only 3d., they would get very nearly equal amounts. In each case the inequalities were reduced, and justice was more equally done than if they took the simple figure of population. He hoped the Government would consider this suggestion.

MR. GOSCHEN (who was received with cries of "Divide!"): I think hon. Members opposite who show, perhaps not unnaturally, signs of impatience at this time of the Session must remember that it is not our fault that a Bill of this kind, touching as it does all our constituencies, comes at a time when the House is really wearied, and would like to be relieved of its labours. Here is a Bill vitally affecting London—not only affecting our constituents individually, but vitally affecting London—introducing new principles for the division of money which is raised upon the whole of the Metropolis, which comes on when hon. Members are thoroughly worn out on a Bank Holiday, when the attendance is such as not to give us a representative House, and now at this moment, when we have not got a representative House to deal with this important question, we have a totally new suggestion made—a valuable suggestion from some points of view—for a new quinquennial Census for London. That is introduced in a single phrase from the right hon. Gentleman, which he will no doubt afterwards expand, as if it were not a matter which would require very great consideration from every point of view. The fact is that, while, on the whole, it may improve the justice of the Bill, it will involve very considerable expense to the Metropolis at large unless the right hon. Gentleman intends it should be an Imperial charges, which, I hope, he does intend. If not, then I have to say that the rates of London are running up very much, and, in addition to all the existing charges, the Government, through the adoption of a bad principle of population, are driven, in order to amend their proposal, to introduce a measure for taking a quinquennial Census for London at the expense of the Metropolis. That is a very serious proposal to lay before us, and I do hope that hon. Members opposite, though they may find themselves weary, will remember that our constituents are deeply interested in this matter, and will, therefore, give us some latitude, as I think we may fairly claim. In the first instance, with regard to the Amendment of my hon. Friend behind me, I have already said a word on the subject. But we have two questions—the principle of population and the Amendment of my hon. Friend. The principles which my hon. Friend has introduced into his Amendment, I think, ought to commend themselves to the approval of every Metropolitan Member. Hon. Members may say they do not approve of the County Council carrying it out, but with regard to the principles involved, I consider them to be infinitely better than the point of population alone. Are these not considerations which ought to be taken into account in determining the distribution of the fund raised upon the whole of the Metropolis? What are they?

"The amount of the local rates in each individual parish in relation to the average rates for the whole of London."

That is a principle which ought to be taken into consideration, but which you exclude by taking it on the point of population. The second point of the Amendment is—

"The circumstances of the local rates in each parish, and whether they are especially high on account of some expenditure specially local and beneficial mainly to the individual parish."

What can be more just than that principle? We talk of equal rates, or of higher or lower rates, but we do not take into consideration in so doing, whether they are specially local and beneficial, and whether the rates are not high, because a parish has, for some particular purpose, run up the rates. I look through the accounts and see many cases where that has happened. There are cases which could be proved if we had the necessary investigation, where rates have been made higher through special local circumstances. Another principle in the Amendment is—

"The relative number of ratepayers rated at £20 and under, excluding compound householders."

I think the whole Committee are of opinion that this question of compounding enters largely into the consideration, and I am informed that in the Press particularly favourable to the Government it is admitted to be a matter deserving of consideration, but they say it ought to be taken into consideration after the Bill has passed. I should think that is rather too late to take it into consideration then. What other points does my hon. Friend raise?

> "The efficiency with which the rates are collected in the parish; the economy with which the rates are administered in the parish; the sanitary condition of the parish and the increased sanitary efficiency of the parish produced from year to year by the Equalisation Fund granted to that parish."

There I entirely agree with my hon. Friend. I consider it to be one of the greatest blots in the Bill that there is absolutely nothing which will ensure that there will be an increase of sanitary efficiency produced by the Equalisation Fund. That I consider one of the great defects in the Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman has not thrown out the olive branch in any way or given us any assurance that any security will be taken for the application of this fund. The right hon. Gentleman might shorten these Debates if, in the same way as is proposed in reference to the Census, he had said that before the stage was concluded he would accept some Amendment or endeavour to work out some clauses by which we may not simply transfer the burden, but may have that which I have insisted upon so often as almost, I am afraid, to weary the Committee —namely, security that the sanitary conditions are the better carried out. That is a point to which I wish to call the attention of the Committee. If the words dealing with the distribution of the fund according to population were omitted from the Bill—and I should certainly vote for their omission—I should then move an Amendment to the Amendment of my hon. Friend, because I am not prepared to hand this duty over to the County Council. I suggest the Local Government Board should undertake it, and that there should be an Order in Council, or that a Provisional Order should be submitted to the House of Commons, so that the House of Commons itself should be able to ratify and take note of the distribution to be made. I do not think that that would be an entirely satisfactory solution. The right hon. Gentleman says that all the solutions we propose are worse than that in the Bill. When he attacks our solutions, he finds weaknesses in them, no doubt; but, when we attack his principle of population, we find it breaks down almost at every point. Everyone who has listened to this Debate will admit, and the right hon. Gentleman himself has admitted, that it has great imperfections. He has already admitted that the population is a shifting one, and yet your rate is not to be changed except once in every 10 years; therefore, the Government are stereotyping the principle of population. One of my hon. Friends, the Member for Putney, has shown that in his constituency the population has more than doubled in 10 years, so that this parish would have been contributing under the Quinquennial Census to other parishes where the population might have decreased. If you had stated that the City, St. George's, Hanover Square, and one or two other parishes should pay £20,000 or £30,000, and you had distributed the money among the poorer parishes, that would have been an equally relevant and rough-and-ready method of carrying out the principle which the right hon. Gentleman has put in the Bill, and in some respects it would have been more candid. There you would have seen that you carried out that which the right hon. Gentleman said was the object of the Bill. He disguises it under the principle of population; but when you come to population he sees he cannot carry it out. He says it must be a night population. Is sanitation not important for the day population? You put the test of population into your Bill, and apply it only so far as it suits your convenience for that larger purpose which you wish to carry out. Neither the right hon. Gentleman nor any of his friends has dealt with the point I have raised, which I think of great importance, and which ought to appeal to everyone who represents a poorer constituency. You are going to help these poorer constituencies and parishes to which population flocks —those parishes which have received accessions of population — but those parishes which had dwindled in their population from decaying industry, and which are as poor as any other parish in the Metropolis, come off badly by the very reason of their poverty. I consider that is a very great defect in this Bill. But the right hon. Gentleman says that our competing plans break down, and he twitted me with having said we should have assistance from the Department and further information in order to work out the scheme. Certainly, we ought to have had more information, and I frankly state to the right hon. Gentleman that is why I did not propound a plan myself—because I have no information as to how much is spent on sanitary efforts in the various parishes of the Metropolis. That information is not in these taxation Returns. You cannot distinguish what is spent under the Public Health Act of 1891 or for other purposes. It is mixed up altogether. If I had put forward a distinct policy which I would have followed myself, it would have been to look in great part to the needs of these parishes to their sanitary expenditure, and to work that in with the other tests which might be put in the Bill. But I cannot do that, because I do not know how far the various parishes would be affected. I do not know how it would work out, and, therefore, I have not ventured to put it on paper. That confirms, to an extraordinary degree, the view of the right hon. Member for the University of London, that we ought to have had a Committee which would have thrashed out the information, and then we should have been able, in a friendly way, and each contributing from his own knowledge of his own constituency all the necessary data, to find out what was the pauperism in the various parishes, because that is one very important element; then what are the sanitary requirements of the various parishes, and how far they have carried them out or failed to carry them out; if they have failed to carry them out because they have not got sufficient funds, or because they have not been sufficiently active, and whether there has been extravagance or not. The House has been invited to pass the Bill in the most light-hearted manner, at the end of the Session, without any necessary information, and the consequence is that there is no doubt an extreme difficulty in working out a counter-plan. Many of us would wish to base the distribution upon expenditure properly conducted, coupled with population if you like, coupled with poverty and with the needs of the various parts of the Metropolis. That would have been far better, and I think it would be generally admitted that if it were possible it would be a better mode than that of taking this basis of a shifting population in the various districts.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The right hon. Gentleman complains of not having information. I must inform him that this Bill was before the House for the best part of last Session, and it was mainly or solely by his exertions that the Bill did not pass last Session. The right hon. Gentleman did not ask us then for information. He has had the whole of this Session and he has not once asked for information of any kind. He might, at the beginning of the Session, if he had wanted information for really framing a scheme, have put some question on the subject, but he has allowed nearly the whole of the Session to pass without asking for information, and it is only at the last moment, when we hope to carry the Bill through, it is only this very night, that the right hon. Gentleman gets up and founds his opposition mainly on the want of information. The right hon. Gentleman has all the information before him which the Government has. The Returns before Parliament relating to the different parishes are very full. They may not be quite so full as the right hon. Gentleman desires, but they are quite full enough upon which to found any scheme the right hon. Gentleman has in his mind. The real fact is that the right hon. Gentleman has not been able to frame any counter scheme. None of the schemes which have been suggested to the House by gentlemen opposite are in the least worthy of consideration. They are all of them essentially bad, and the further schemes which the right hon. Gentleman has ventilated in the course of his speech are equally bad.

General GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith) desired to state to the Committee what would be the effect of this Bill in the Union which Fulham and Hammersmith comprised. The rateable value of the Fulham Union in 1881 was £446,008; and in 1891 it was £964,896; so that they would have had to pay 6d. upon the larger sum and they would only receive for their population on the rate of 1881, which was then 114,811, whereas in 1891 it was 188,875. The part of London to which he was referring was increasing with such enormous rapidity that unless they were practically to have a division every year they could not do justice to it. In these new increasing neighbourhoods the necessity for sanitary work was much greater in proportion than in the older parts of London. This was especially the case in Hammersmith, where the population for the last 10 years had increased at the rate of over 2,500 a year. That single fact would illustrate the unfairness of taking the population on the basis of the last Census. That was one objection he had to the Bill, and another objection was that unless they took the sanitary expenses into consideration they could not do what was fair. His constituents wanted to receive as much assistance as they could, but they wanted to do it fairly. The President of the Local Government Board said the Opposition had as much information as the Government. Then he had to press that they had not got sufficient information to enable them to frame a satisfactory measure, and that accounted for the Government Bill being what it was. He was anxious that a measure of this sort should be fair and should be free from Party influences, and for that reason he would not give any management into the hands of the London County Council, which, though it had done good work, proceeded on political lines. Instead of the County Council they should place the matter in the hands of the Local Government Board.

MR. W. LONG (Liverpool, West Derby) desired to say a few words in reference to the most extraordinary speech they had heard from the President of the Local Government Board. In a very short speech the right hon. Gentleman had contrived to make a number of very inaccurate statements. He commenced by saying that this Bill was prevented passing last year mainly by the action of the right hon. Member for St. George's, Hanover Square. A more unfounded statement never was made. The reason why the Bill did not pass last year was because the Government, who were responsible for the measure, did not think it worth while to bring it forward until the very fag-end of the Session, when there was no opportunity for adequately considering it, and when, despite its various contentious points, they desired it to be passed as a non-contentious measure. The simple reason was because the Government did not think it worth their while, or necessary, to bring the question forward until the extreme end of the Session, and then they suggested that the Bill should be taken as a non-contentious measure. The right hon. Gentleman also said that the Opposition never indicated for one moment until now, at this late hour, that they were not satisfied with the details of the Bill.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I said you never asked for information.

MR. W. LONG: The Opposition, on the Second Reading, and on every opportunity since, had pressed for more detailed information. The right hon. Gentleman shook his head, but that would not alter the facts. He, for one, had pressed that view on the right hon. Gentleman. Last year, when it was urged that the Bill might be taken, to a large extent, as a non-contentious measure, the Opposition said that, although they were not opposed to the principle of the Bill, the subject was one of difficulty, and they required further information before they could adequately deal with the subject. And on the Second Reading they expressed the desire that there should be a Committee to inquire into the whole facts and circumstances, upon whose Report the Bill should be founded, and had that course been adopted the measure would have passed without any great difficulty. Now, when the right hon. Gentleman was asked for information with regard to the proposals in his own Bill, he thought it sufficient to shelter himself behind the assertion that the Opposition could not produce a better plan. "If you know nothing," said the right hon. Gentleman, "the Government know no more." A more astonishing defence from a Minister in charge of a Bill he had never heard. What his right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's desired was, that if money was to be granted out of the rates of one parish of London for the relief of the rates of another parish, there should be some other result than that of merely relieving the burden of taxation. If they were relieving parishes from a certain amount of taxation they should at the same time secure from those parishes a better system of carrying out the Sanitary Laws, which was a matter in regard to which there was great room for improvement. It was often said that the administration of the Sanitary Laws all over the country was far from satisfactory; and anyone who knew anything of London knew that the administration of the Sanitary Laws in the Metropolis might be vastly improved. There was nothing, however, in the Bill which would bring about this result. There was nothing in the Bill to secure even that the money should be applied to sanitation; there was nothing in it to indicate what action would be taken if the Local Bodies applied their grants to other purposes; and there was nothing in it in the way of strong pressure on the Local Bodies to do their sanitary work better than it had been done in the past times. If the Opposition had the information they asked for, they would be able to decide whether this money would be a benefit or a curse to the parishes which could receive it. But they had not that information; and the right hon. Gentleman told them that they knew as much as he did that he had no further information to give and that as they had not asked for the information earlier they should not ask for it now. That was a monstrous doctrine for the right hon. Gentleman to lay down. Even if it were true that the Opposition only discovered those weak points of the Bill at the present stage, why should they not emphasise them, and ask for information about them? Why, when the Local Government Bill of 1888 were under discussion hon. Members opposite were constantly pressing for information on all sorts of points and at every stage of the Bill, and the Conservative Government of the day were frequently told that if they did not give this information the Bill would not be allowed to pass. The Conservative Government did supply the House with tons weight of information on every conceivable point pressed by London Members, by County Members, and by Borough Members; and the present Government ought not to complain if a demand for further information in regard to this most important Bill was made upon them. When the Conservative Government gave out of the Probate Duty grants in aid to the Local Authorities, they were told that they were seducing the ratepayers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman cannot go into that question. The question before the Committee is the distribution of the fund on the basis of population.

MR. W. LONG said, the Amendment of his right hon. Friend proposed that one of the conditions which should apply to the distribution of the grant was—

> "(f) The sanitary condition of the parish and the increased sanitary efficiency of the parish produced from year to year by the Equalisation Fund granted to that parish."

It was to that Sub-section (f) that he was addressing himself; but, of course, he bowed at once to the ruling of the Chairman, and would only say in conclusion that he repudiated in the strongest possible terms the statement of the President of the Local Government Board that the delay in passing or considering this Bill was in any way to be attributed to the Opposition. The responsibility rested entirely with the Government themselves in not bringing the Bill on earlier in the Session.

MR. BARTLEY desired to say that the only object he had in raising this point was to secure, if possible, some better system of adjusting the fund. He contended that the standard of population would lead to great irregularities and hardships on many districts, and if the word "population" were left out he would be willing to accept any reasonable amendment of his proposal. He was no great admirer of the London County Council; but bad as the County Council was, even that body would not distribute the money worse than the way proposed under the Bill, and he would rather trust any individual Radical opponent—even the hon. Member for Shoreditch himself—and that was saying a great deal—in administering the fund than the scheme of the Government. He could not see why the Government refused all Amendments to the proposal, which they must see would inflict hardship and injustice.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 119; Noes 43.—(Division List, No. 212.)

MR. GOSCHEN said, he proposed to omit the words, in line 21, from "population," to the end of line 26, beginning with the words "with this exception," for the purpose of allowing the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill to state the effect of this particular exception, and to explain how it would really act.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

*Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that no difficulty would arise where the parish and the sanitary district were the same. But where they were not the same, where the sanitary district was formed of several parishes, with separate rating for Poor Law and other purposes, by law the general sanitary expenses were borne by the district as a whole and not by the parishes separately. In such a case the district was treated as a whole for the purpose of receiving the grant under the Bill. But in order to give poorer parishes a certain advantage in the distribution of the sum apportioned to the district, it was divided among the parishes in proportion to their respective population. With regard to the complaint made by the hon. and gallant Member for Woolwich in respect of Charlton, the hon. and gallant Member pointed out that although Charlton paid the sanitary expenses incurred in its own parish, and was treated separately for the purpose of expenditure, it was not treated separately for the purpose of receipts from funds apart from other parishes in the district. That was so; but the Government were advised that, legally, Charlton should not bear its own expenses of sanitary work, but that those expenses should be paid out of the Common Fund, to which all the parishes should contribute rateably. If this were done Charlton would gain considerably more than lose by the mode of contribution proposed by the Bill.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, it was a difficult statement to follow, though the right hon. Gentleman had done his best to make it clear. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the result was not this: that wealthier parishes aggregated together with poorer parishes in the same sanitary district would, under the system proposed by the Bill, receive, whereas if they stood alone they would pay? That was an anomaly which was admitted by the President of the Local Government Board, and which did not appear to be got over by the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Chairman called upon Mr. Alban Gibbs.

Mr. J. STUART: On a point of Order, Sir, I beg to ask whether this is the proper place for the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London to move the Amendment he has put down?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; I think it is in the right place, because it is not a definition.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS (London) moved to insert at the end of Sub-section 4 the following words:—

"Provided that, in the case of the City, the population shall for the purpose of this Bill be that ascertained by the day Census taken in 1891, unless or until the Local Government Board shall take a day Census or shall call on the City to do so. Provided also, that any parish may similarly take a day Census under the superintendence of the Local Government Board, and that the word 'population' in this Act shall mean the population so determined."

The hon. Gentleman said he hoped he was not asking for anything that was not fair, and he was sure his constituency would not ask for anything that was not fair. In moving this Amendment he was fully convinced that it was a simple measure of justice that he was demanding. The City had been attacked rather strongly because it objected to pay the contribution in exactly the way settled by the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India and the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill held the doctrine that any scheme was good enough, whether founded on justice or not, which had the result of taking sufficient money from the City. The Secretary of State for India put forward the argument that because the City had given before it was right that it should give again, and that the City was asked to give in the Bill put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square. The City gave cheerfully to the Common Poor Fund, not only because the object was good, but because proper checks were imposed on the expenditure, and because the money was to be distributed on a rational basis. The only other argument of the right hon. Gentleman consisted of the use of the blessed word "Municipality," but the area of the London County Council was a Municipality neither in name nor in fact. A Municipality raised and administered rates for the common good, and those who found the money controlled the expenditure. What had that to do with a proposal that Parliament should order the proceeds of a certain fixed rate to be handed over for administration to people who did not pay it? Nobody could say that the state of affairs applicable to a Municipality was applicable to the City.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he thought the hon. Gentleman's remarks were scarcely in Order.

MR. ALBAN GIBBS, continuing, said, he was attempting to show that the City was right in objecting to the way in which it was proposed to take the Census. However, he would leave that subject. The only other argument that had been adduced against the basis of a day Census was that of the hon. Member for Bermondsey, who made a direct attack upon the Amendment by anticipation. He drew a picture of the day population of the City leaving their offices by the back door and making off to Bermondsey, where, he suggested, they would get satisfaction for any increased rate that obtained in the City. Surely the hon. Gentleman did not mean to say that the people who left their offices by the back door and went off to Bermondsey were those who paid rates in the City. Of course these people might suffer, because with the raising of the rates their employers might have to consider whether they could afford to go on with their business, and, in order to carry their business on, might have to reduce salaries. He was sure they would be very sorry to do so, but no one could go on working at a loss for ever. Those who paid the rates in the City were the employers who did not go so much to Bermondsey as to Marylebone, Paddington, and St. George's, where they found their rates raised as well as in the City. Returns showed that 89,000 of the day population of the City went to stations outside the City area at night. Yet it was for that day population that the sanitary expenses were to a great extent incurred, the roads made, and the streets lighted; and he submitted that it ought to be the basis of any Return of population for the purposes of the Bill. The City was in an exceptional condition with regard to its population. The small number of the night population in the City was due to the demand for offices, to the great railway facilities enabling people to live in the country or suburbs, and more than all, perhaps, to the very strict working of the Inhabited House Duty, which was 9d. in the £1 on houses of any size. Only one caretaker was allowed on the premises by night, and he must be a menial. If two persons—two caretakers or a clerk and a caretaker—remained on the premises the duty was charged not on the part of the house that was inhabited, but on the whole building, and that largely increased the amount of duty. If the duty were not construed so strictly a great many more persons would live in the offices and buildings in the City. He contended, therefore, that a night Census was not a fair basis of population to take for the City. He maintained that a day Census was not more difficult to take than a night Census. A day Census of the City had been taken three times—in 1866, in 1881, and on April 29, 1891. The Returns from this last Census showed that on that day there were 29,520 employers in the City, 202,213 male *employés*, 50,416 female *employés*, and 19,200 children under 16 years of age. They also showed that in 16 hours, from 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning onwards, over 1,130,000 persons entered the City. That was sufficient to show that the City had already enough to do with its rates. People, in talking about the City, said that the City was rich. When they were so talking many people had in their minds the Corporations of the City of London. The Corporations had a certain amount of money, and he could easily tell the Committee how it was spent.

THE CHAIRMAN said, a discussion on that point would not be in Order.

MR. ALBAN GIBBS, continuing, said, the fact ought not to be lost sight of that there was a poor population in the City as well as in other parishes, that there were many struggling traders and shopkeepers who made very little profit who ought not to be rated higher than at present, when they could scarcely make enough to pay their rents. The City would rather contribute the exaction in the form of benevolence than have an unjust tax placed upon it.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, after line 26, insert—

"Provided that, in the case of the City, the population shall for the purpose of this Bill be that ascertained by the day Census taken in 1891, unless or until the Local Government Board shall take a day Census, or shall call on the City to do so.

Provided, also, that any parish may similarly take a day Census under the superintendence of the Local Government Board, and that the word 'population' in this Act shall mean the population so determined." — (*Mr. Alban Gibbs.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, this Amendment would reduce the contribution of the City under the Bill to about one-third. It stood at 5d. in the £1, and the Amendment would reduce it 1.8d. in the £1. He entirely denied that the City of London had any grievance at all. Nor did he admit the figures of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London, who said the rates for the City were 5s. 2d. in the £1. He thought the right hon. Gentleman must have included the Militia rate and some other rates not common to the whole of London. As far as he was able to ascertain, the actual rates levied in 1891-92, as calculated on the valuation, amounted to only 4s. 8d. in the £1, while the average rates over the whole of London in the last three years were 5s. 3d. in the £1. Therefore the rates in the City of London were about 7d. less. The Mover of the Amendment proposed to reduce the contribution of the City of London by calculating it upon the basis of a day Census instead of a night Census. If the day instead of the night population of the City were taken, it would include 6,000 Post Office *employés* who never slept in the City and enormous numbers of similar people who lived elsewhere and were rated elsewhere. Why should such people be counted a second time at a place where they did not live and where they paid no rates? The principle of the Amendment was one which the Government could not entertain for a moment. Even when the City was brought under the provisions of this Bill it would still pay less than the average Metropolitan rate.

SIR J. LUBBOCK said, that surely they ought to have something more than the opinion of the President of the Local Government Board as to what the rates in the City of London were. He should like to know where the right hon. Gentleman got his information from.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, his figures were taken from the only available Return at the Local Government Board.

MR. BARTLEY: What Return?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the Return showed the actual expenditure, and from that he had made up his figures.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK said, he thought they ought to have something more definite than the mere opinion of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject. The right hon. Gentleman had not told them on what Return his figures were based; surely this was a reasonable question to ask. It was most unfair to take the population of the City on Sunday or at night when only a few caretakers or housemaids were left in it. The real population of the City consisted of those who worked in it and made their living in it. On the other hand, the real population was not those who slept, but those who worked and thought in the City. That population exceeded 300,000. For them the City had to provide sanitation, streets, and lighting. The expenditure was based, and must be based, not on the 37,000, but on the 300,000. The injustice was, perhaps, most glaring in the case of the City, but it was not confined to the City. The hon. Member for Wandsworth had shown that out of 90 districts there would be 39 new anomalies created by the Bill. So far as the City was concerned, he maintained that to the main expense for sanitary purposes the City already paid its full share. The annual expense of the main drainage in London was £190,000 a year, to which must be added the capital expenditure and interest on such expenditure. To all this the City contributed on its full rateable value. This expenditure then was already equalised. The rest of the sewerage expenditure, that for dust removal, &c., for the Metropolis, exclusive of the City, amounted to £320,000 a year. The cost in the City was £68,000. It was now proposed to make the City pay another £100,000; so that out of £320,000 a year the City would be paying £170,000. If these items were paid by a general rate the share of the City would be about £100,000. As it was, they were really legislating in the dark. For instance, the primary purpose of the Bill was to equalise, or "aid in equalising," the expenses of the Sanitary Authority incurred under the Public Health Act of 1891, and yet the Government had not thought it necessary to lay on the Table any Return showing what those expenses were. He would like to ask his hon. Friends who were supporting the Bill whether anyone of them knew what the expenditure was under that Act. Was the right hon. Gentleman himself aware? But, at any rate, he submitted that the Amendment of his hon. Friend was both logical and just, and that unless it was accepted they would really not be distributing the funds according to population.

*Mr. KIMBER said, he understood the Minister in charge of the Bill to challenge with a direct contradiction the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University that the rateable value of the City of London was over £4,000,000. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, the right hon. Gentleman contradicted something, and he should like to know what it was. If it was the statement that the rateable value of the City was over £4,000,000, he would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that that fact was shown by the best authority they had. [*Cries of* "Agreed!"] He was glad to hear hon. Members opposite say they agreed with his statement; and he hoped the Minister in charge of the Bill would take that to his heart. The right hon. Gentleman in his argument against the Amendment referred to figures in some Returns, which he said he could not quote. It was a monstrous thing that the House should be called upon to pass this Bill on *data* afforded by the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman backed up by official documents which the right hon. Gentleman said were in existence, but which he could not quote.

Sir J. Lubbock

*Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE (interposing): I said the Return was laid on the Table. I have it here.

Mr. KIMBER: What is the date?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: It is Part 4, for the year 1891-92. It was presented on the 20th of January of this year.

Mr. KIMBER said, the Committee had decided that their so-called equalisation fund was to be distributed according to population. But what was the population of a parish? Was it the number of persons who slept in it at night? Was it the workers and toilers? Who were the ratepayers of the City? Were they the persons who slept there at night? Certainly not. Who were the people for the benefit of whom sanitary measures in the City of London were taken? Was it the people who worked there during the day or the people who slept there at night? Was the health of those who lived in the City in the daytime not to be considered at all? It was absurd and monstrous to say that they were not to be counted in the population of the City. They it was who made London what it was—the great Metropolis of the country, and they should be reckoned as the population of London in the distribution of this dole. The right hon. Gentleman also objected to the Amendment because it would largely reduce the amount expected to be got from the City by the arrangement proposed in the Bill. The question was simply whether the Amendment was fair and just. If it were, then it ought to be accepted whatever might be its consequences.

Mr. W. LONG said, that while he thought his hon. Friend was fully entitled in the interests of his constituents to move this Amendment; and while he entirely agreed with the view that the method selected for taxing the City was unfair, he hoped the Amendment would not be pressed to a Division. The only safe and right basis of taxation was the ability of the taxed to bear the burden, and, judged by that test, no just case could be made out for the relief of the City, which was the wealthiest part of the Metropolis. There was, however, some features of the Debate to which he would like to call attention. The President of the Local Government Board had informed the House that his calculations with respect to the City were based on Returns for 1891 and 1892; but in reference to Camberwell the right hon. Gentleman the other day gave the figures for 1894. It was ridiculous and misleading to give the statistics for different years in different localities, according as it suited the purpose of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman had further asked whether the sanitary arrangements of the City could be supposed to be undertaken for those who went to the City "merely for business." Certainly they were. Did the right hon. Gentleman suppose that all the costly sanitary work of the City was carried out for the benefit of a few caretakers? Under the circumstances, they were entitled to ask that the day as well as the night population of the City should be taken into account. However, he did not go back from his statement that the City was able to pay, and consequently he hoped the hon. Gentleman would not go to a Division upon his Amendment.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, he would appeal to the justice as well as to the generosity of hon. Members opposite. ["Divide!"] When a large sum of money was proposed to be taken from the City in addition to the existing burdens imposed upon it, he thought he had a right to say a word on its behalf. The right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill had said that this burden ought to belong to those who lived in the City. He admitted that; but who were they who lived in the City? Were they wholly those who were caretakers and servants, who had no connection with the City except that they drew wages for comparatively humble work, or were they the men who lived in the City day by day, doing the work and managing the affairs of the world's centre of commerce?

*MR. R. G. WEBSTER said, it was for those who went into the City "merely for business" that all the sanitary arrangements of the City were provided. His suggestion was that the day and night population of the City, and for the other parts of London, should be added together and then divided by two. That would give the average number of the population which during the 24 hours sanitary appliances, roads, lights, &c., would have to be supplied for, and would be a much fairer basis of calculation than merely calculating the night population, who were, in the case of the City, mostly caretakers. Who used the roads and streets in the City—the day or night population? Why, of course, mainly the former.

Question put, and negatived.

*SIR J. LUBBOCK, who said he had looked up Part IV. of the Local Government Board Returns, but there was nothing bearing out the statement of his right hon. Friend that the average City rate was only 4s. 6d., moved to insert, in page 1, line 26, after "district"—

"Provided always that, unless the sanitary rates in a sanitary district shall, on the average of the last three years, have exceeded or fallen short of the average sanitary rate (hereinafter defined) by at least 6d. in the £1, such district and the parishes therein shall not be liable to contribute or entitled to receive any sum to or from the equalisation fund for the year."

The right hon. Baronet explained that the object of this Amendment was to carry out the avowed intentions of the Government. If this Amendment were carried, no parish would pay unless its rate was substantially below the average, and none would receive unless its rates were distinctly above the average. The Bill as it stood did not effect its object. Another great advantage would be the simplicity it would introduce. There were 95 districts dealt with under the Bill. Of these 60 would pay or receive less than £5,000. There were only 12 which would pay or receive more than £10,000. In many cases the amounts were very small, but what an enormous amount of book-keeping, what thousands of entries they would involve, practically to no purpose. For instance, the Tower, with a rateable value of £4,000, would pay £4; St. Catherine's, £10,000, £11; Horsleydown, £80,000, £30; Lee, £135,000, £138; St. Andrew, Holborn, £235,000, £600; St. Saviour's, £121,000, £300; St. Luke's, £320,000, £400; and Chelsea, £730,000, £900. With two or three exceptions the mere book-keeping would cost more than the districts would gain. This would be an immense addition to the expense of the Metropolis with no advantage to the ratepayers.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 26, after the word "district," to insert the words—

"Provided always that, unless the sanitary rates in a sanitary district shall on the average of the last three years have exceeded or fallen short of the average sanitary rate (hereinafter defined) by at least 6d. in the £1, such district and the parishes therein shall not be liable to contribute, or entitled to receive, any sum to or from the equalisation fund for the year."—(*Sir J. Lubbock.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

It being after Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Wednesday.

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL.

(No. 264.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended by the Standing Committee, further considered.

Mr. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton) said, he would move the Amendment standing in his name. The words he wished to have left out seemed to have been inserted in the interest of the person in default, but he did not see how they could benefit him.

Amendment proposed, in page 9, line 6, to leave out from the word "society" to the word "shall" in line 7.—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.) said, the words were undoubtedly put in mainly in the interest of the persons charged, but if the hon. Gentleman thought they would do the accused no good he was willing to leave them out.

Mr. BARTLEY said, he thought it was a pity to make this alteration. The matter was fully considered in Committee, and the decision arrived at was that the words were for the benefit of the person concerned.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, if objection were taken he was afraid they would have to Divide.

It being after Midnight, and Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

British Museum (Purchase of Land) Bill.

Chimney Sweepers Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act for further promoting the Revision of the Statute Law by repealing enactments which have ceased to be in force or have become unnecessary." [Statute Law Revision Bill [*Lords*].

VALUATION OF LANDS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].

(No. 345.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 316.)

Read the third time, and passed.

PATENT AGENTS REGISTRATION (*re-committed*) BILL.—(No. 334.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (EXEMPTION FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE BILL.

(No. 54.)

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [11th April] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (ACCOMMODATION).

Ordered, That Sir Charles Dilke be discharged from the Select Committee on House of Commons (Accommodation).

Ordered, That Mr. Edward Morton be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.

On Motion of Sir J. T. Hibbert, Bill to continue various Expiring Laws, ordered to be brought in by Sir J. T. Hibbert, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Attorney General.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 349.]

House adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 7th August 1894.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (TOWER BRIDGE SOUTHERN APPROACH) BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª, with the Amendments.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): My Lords, I have to move a series of Amendments on this Bill, the majority of which are merely with the view of bringing it into better shape. The important Amendment which I have to move is in that portion of what may be called the Betterment Clause, which refers to the compulsory purchase of lands if owners or lessees do not agree with the assessment of the Local Authority. My Lords, I wish to explain to the House that I have no responsibility for this clause whatever, and that my intervention is really to render the clause more intelligible and better in working. As the clause came from the Select Committee there were certain points in it which would have been difficult to work, and which might have been the cause of some obstruction and mischief. My Lords, I have now to move an Amendment which will, I think, simplify that matter; but I do not wish it to be understood that I make myself responsible for the principle or policy of the clause, on which I desire to express no opinion. My Lords, as I do not think that these Amendments will be likely to meet with objection either from the House or from the promoters, I will move them *en bloc*. They are all on Clause 36 of the Bill.

(Amendments moved in Clause 36, moved accordingly.)

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, this new clause which has come down from the Committee upstairs is at once very long and very important, comprising 20 sections and 10 pages. It is a very important one also, because by agreeing to it your Lordships will give your assent to that much-vexed question of betterment. But, my Lords, this clause as it came down from the Committee seems to me to be by no means on all-fours with the recommendations of your Lordships' Committee. Then the noble Lord the Chairman has proposed various Amendments to it. Those Amendments also are of considerable importance, and I must say they have a very mitigating effect on what I believe to be some of the worst errors of the clause as it came before the Committee. I think, my Lords, I should have been justified in asking that the consideration of this clause with these Amendments should have been postponed to some other day when there would be a better attendance of your Lordships to consider them, and when there would have been a longer period for the persons taking an interest in this question to consider the Amendments proposed by the noble Lord the Chairman, because, after all, we only had these Amendments before us for the first time this morning. But, my Lords, I do not desire to in any way act the part of a captious critic, nor do I desire, considering the period of the Session, to put any difficulties in the way of the progress of this Bill. I am anxious only to say that in my humble judgment the conditions imposed in this clause upon the carrying into practice the principle of betterment which your Lordships hereby assent to are so onerous that they will practically render carrying into effect your Lordships' decision impossible. I do not believe that any Local Authority with these conditions imposed upon it at all likely to take up the question of betterment, and to endeavour to enforce it. But, my Lords, that only applies to an opinion of my own, and it is not for me, therefore, to say more to your Lordships upon that question. That is a matter for the Local Authorities who have to carry the principles of betterment into practice. What I want to do to-day is merely to enter a *caveat* against it being supposed that I, and those who think with me in assenting to this Third Reading with these Amendments, agree to the conditions imposed by this clause. I also wish on behalf of the Local Authorities, and on behalf of the London County Council, to say that they reserve to themselves the fullest power of dealing with this question and of discussing it again when it comes up in another place, and that it must not be

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

supposed that because the Third Reading is assented to here to-day that they are thereby debarred from further opposing it when it gets back to the other House. I do not know what course they have determined upon, but they hold that they will be wanting in no courtesy to this House, nor in regard to following the usual forms of procedure in raising this question. With that *caveat*, my Lords, I beg to give my assent to the Third Reading of this Bill.

THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, I think it would have been well if the noble Lord had pointed out in what respect the Bill goes beyond the recommendations of the Committee to which your Lordships assented not long ago, and of which the noble Lord was a Member. Having gone carefully through the Bill, both before and since the Committee sat, I must say that it seems to me it does carry out entirely the recommendations of the Committee, of which, as I have said, the noble Lord himself was a Member.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I most particularly referred to the clause as it came from the Committee, and I said that I thought the Amendments proposed by the noble Lord the Chairman had a very mitigating effect upon and greatly improved the clause. It is only on small points now, perhaps, that the clause cannot be brought within the recommendations of the Committee; but I meant to make myself perfectly clear that the clause as it came from the Select Committee did fail, in my opinion, to comply with the conclusions of the Report of the Committee.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND: While the noble Lord is explaining his views to the House, perhaps he would not object to explain what he meant by saying that he was speaking on behalf of the Local Authorities and of the London County Council. I can understand his speaking on behalf of the London County Council, but will he have the goodness to tell us what are the other Local Authorities of which he was speaking?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: There are no other Local Authorities concerned in this particular Bill. I was only entering a *caveat* in reference to other Local Authorities with regard to other Bills containing betterment clauses similar to this Bill.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND: Then in that case it will be competent to the Local Authorities to say they object.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I am not now speaking as the mouthpiece of any Local Authority. I am merely entering a *caveat* on my own account to guard against the idea being entertained on the part of noble Lords who might suppose we ought to consider ourselves bound by the conditions which are imposed by this clause.

Amendments agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

THAMES CONSERVANCY BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3^a.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY) moved several Amendments which he stated were of a purely formal character.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

PRIVATE BILLS.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES moved that the Standing Orders be amended as follows:—

NOTE.—The words between [ ] are to be omitted, and the words printed in *Italics* are to be inserted.

(Notices to state objects of application and intention to seek for powers to purchase lands, or to amalgamate, &c., or to dissolve company, or to levy or alter tolls, *or impose improvement charge.*)

3. In all cases where application is intended to be made for leave to bring in a Local Bill notice shall be given stating the objects of such intended application; and if it be intended to apply for powers for the compulsory purchase of land or houses, or for extending the time granted by any former Act for that purpose, or to amalgamate with any other company, or to sell or lease the undertaking, or to purchase or take on lease the undertaking of any other company, or to enter into working agreements or traffic arrangements, or to dissolve any company, or to amend or repeal any former Act or Acts, or to levy any tolls, rates, or duties, or to alter any existing tolls, rates, or duties, or to confer, vary, or extinguish any exemption from payment of tolls, rates, or duties, or to confer, vary, or extinguish any other rights or privileges, *or to impose on any lands or houses or to render any lands or houses liable to the imposition of any special charge in respect of any improvement*, the notice shall specify such intention; and shall also specify the company,

person or persons, with, to, from, or by whom it is intended to be proposed that such amalgamation, sale, purchase, lease, working agreements, or traffic arrangements shall be made; and the whole of the notice relating to the same Bill shall, except as provided by Order 9, be included in the same advertisement, which shall be headed by a short title, descriptive of the undertaking or Bill, and shall be subscribed with the name and address of the person, company, corporation, or firm responsible for the publication of the notice.

New Standing Order—

(*Notice to owners, &c. in case of improvement charge.*)

12*a*. *On or before the fifteenth day of December immediately preceding the application for a Bill by which any special charge is imposed upon any lands or houses or any lands or houses are rendered liable to have a special charge imposed upon them in connection with any improvement, notice in writing shall be given to the owners or reputed owners, lessees or reputed lessees, and occupiers of all such lands and houses of such proposed special charge or liability.*

(Plan, book of reference, and section to be deposited with clerk of the peace, &c.)

24. In cases of Bills of the Second Class, a plan and also a duplicate thereof, together with a book of reference thereto, and a section and also a duplicate thereof, as hereinafter described, and in cases of Bills of the First Class, by which any lands or houses are intended to be taken, *and in the case of all Bills by which any special charge is imposed upon any lands or houses, or any lands or houses are rendered liable to have a special charge imposed upon them in connection with any improvement*, a plan and duplicate thereof, together with a book of reference thereto, shall be deposited for public inspection at the office of the clerk of the peace for every county, riding or division in England or Ireland, or in the office of the principal sheriff clerk of every county in Scotland, and where any county in Scotland is divided into districts or divisions, then also in the office of the principal sheriff clerk in or for each district or division in or through which the work is proposed to be made, maintained, varied, extended, or enlarged, or in which such lands or houses are situate, on or before the thirtieth day of November immediately preceding the application for the Bill.

(Deposit of Bills at Treasury and other public Departments.)

33. On or before the twenty-first day of December a printed copy of every Local Bill shall be deposited at the Office of Her Majesty's Treasury and at the General Post Office;

* * * *

A printed copy of every Local Bill relating to any matter in England or Wales, within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board, *or to which Standing Order No. 38 applies*, at the Office of that Board.

* * * *

(Contents of book of reference.)

46. The book of reference shall contain the names of the owners or reputed owners, lessees or reputed lessees, and occupiers of all lands and houses in the line of the proposed work, or within the limits of deviation as defined upon the plan, *or upon which any special charge is imposed, or which are rendered liable to have a special charge imposed upon them in connection with any improvement*, and shall describe such lands and houses respectively.

(Copy of H.C. Bill for conferring powers, &c., on Municipal Corporation, Local Board, or Local Authority, to be deposited at office of Local Government Board not later than two days after First Reading.)

60*a*. In the case of Bills brought from the House of Commons:—

A copy of every Bill whereby application is made by or on behalf of any Municipal Corporation, Local Board, Improvement Commissioners, or other Local Authority in England or Wales, for power in respect of any matter within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board, and of every Bill whereby any powers, rights, duties, capacities, liabilities, or obligations are sought to be conferred or imposed on any Local Authority in England or Wales in respect of any matter within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board, and of every Bill relating to public roads, highways, or bridges, *and of every Bill to which Standing Order No. 38 applies*, shall be deposited at the office of the Local Government Board not later than two days after the Bill is read a first time.

(Meeting of Members of limited company, society, &c. in the case of Bill empowering or requiring the company, society, &c. to do any act not authorised under existing powers.)

63. In the case of every Bill, whether originating in this House, or in the House of Commons, [empowering or requiring.]

(1) *promoted by* any company, society, association, or co-partnership formed or registered under the Companies Act, 1862, or constituted by Act of Parliament, Royal charter, letters patent, deed of settlement, contract of co-partnery, cost book regulations, or other instruments, and under the management of a committee or directors or trustees (and not being a company to which the preceding order applies); *or*

(2) *empowering or requiring any such company, society, association, or co-partnership, not being the promoters of the Bill*, to do any act not authorised by the memorandum and articles of association or other instrument or instruments constituting or regulating such company, society, association, or co-partnership, or authorising or enacting the abandonment of the undertaking, or any part of the undertaking of any such company, society, association, or co-partnership, or the dissolution thereof, proof shall be given before the Examiner before the Second Reading of the Bill in this House, that the following requirements have been complied with, and the Examiner shall report accordingly:

* * * *

New Standing Order—

(Provisional Order Confirmation Bills may be referred to the Chairman of Committees.)

102*a*. *Any Provisional Order Confirmation Bill may, before being committed to a Committee* *of the Whole House, be referred to the Chairman of Committees, with respect to all or any of the Orders scheduled thereto, to be dealt with in the same manner as an unopposed Local Bill.*

(Railway, &c. rates and charges.)

123*a*. In the case of every Bill for incorporating a railway, canal, or tramroad company, or for giving any powers to an existing railway, canal, or tramroad company to which no Rates and Charges Order Confirmation Act expressly applies, the Committee on the Bill shall fix the rates and charges for merchandise traffic (including small parcels of a perishable nature conveyed by passenger train, *exceeding 56 lbs. in weight*) by reference to the Rates and Charges Order Confirmation Act of some other company which, in the opinion of the Committee, will properly and conveniently apply; and the Committee shall, in the case of an existing company, provide that the rates and charges for merchandise traffic and such small parcels as aforesaid so fixed shall be in substitution for the rates and charges for similar traffic authorised to be taken by the company under their existing Acts.

(No Naturalisation Bill to be read a second time without a certificate being produced touching the petitioner's conduct.)

179. No Bill for naturalising any person [born in any foreign territory] shall be read a second time until the petitioner shall produce a certificate from one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State respecting his conduct, and shall take the oath of allegiance at the Bar of the House.

In the schedule of fees on page 75 leave out the last paragraph, viz.:

"The Second Reading fee on Bills promoted by Local Authorities is limited to £81, unless the Bill authorises the receipt of any rate, charge, fare, or similar revenue in respect of the exercise of powers beyond the district of the Local Authority."

And on page 76, after—

"All other Local Bills . . . 81 0 0"

insert—

The Second Reading fees on Bills promoted by Local Authorities are limited to £27, £54, and £81, as the case may be, except in the case of Bills authorising the receipt of any rate, charge, fare, or similar revenue in respect of the exercise of powers beyond the districts of the Local Authorities.

He said, that the first of the Amendments referred to the embodiment of the betterment principle, and he believed accurately followed the recommendations of the Committee. If any noble Lord had questions to ask, he would be happy to answer them.

Amendments agreed to.

LOCOMOTIVE THRESHING ENGINES BILL.—(No. 158.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) (CANALS OF THE GREAT NORTHERN AND CERTAIN OTHER RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 184.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2.) (BRIDGWATER, &c., CANALS) BILL.—(No. 185.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) (ABERDARE, &c. CANALS) BILL.—(No. 186.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 5) (REGENT'S CANAL) BILL.—(No. 187.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) (RIVER ANCHOLME, &c.) BILL.—(No. 188.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 8) (RIVER CAM, &c.) BILL.—(No. 189.)

House in Committee (according to Order), : Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Monday next.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 10) (CANALS OF THE CALEDONIAN AND NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 190.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Amendments made: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Manday next.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 12) (GRAND CANAL, &c.) BILL.—(No. 191.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Amendments made: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 202.)

House adjourned during pleasure.

House resumed.

The Lord Steward (*M. Breadalbane*)—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lords Commissioners.

TENANTS ARBITRATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next: (The Earl Spencer). (No. 203.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Twelve o'clock A.M., to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 7th August 1894.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [*Lords*].

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "now read the third time," in order to add the words "re-committed in respect of paragraph 16 of the Croydon Tramways Extension Order," — (*Mr. Snape,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words 'now read the third time' stand part of the Question."

MR. SNAPE (Lancashire, S.E., Heywood): I believe there is no objection to the course I propose to take, and I therefore move the Amendment without comment.

Question put, and negatived.

Words added.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Bill re-committed; considered in Committee.

MR. SNAPE moved, in paragraph 16, page 19, line 31, after "mile," insert

"but it shall not be lawful, without the consen of the Local Authority, for the promoters or any Company or person working or using the tramways to take or demand on Sunday or on any bank or other public holiday any higher rates or charges than those levied by them on ordinary week days."

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

QUESTIONS.

LIFE-SAVING APPARATUS.

MR. LUTTRELL (Devon, Tavistock): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of diminishing the dangers to shipwrecked crews, and consequently to those who are engaged in the saving of life at sea, he will allow the directions on the life-saving apparatus to be in four languages instead of two?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): Yes, Sir; for the future the directions on the tally boards will be in English, German, French, and Italian. Italian has been chosen as the fourth language because Norwegian seamen very frequently know either English or German. This change will involve the expenditure of some money which, I think, will be well spent, and I am obliged to my hon. Friend for having pressed the matter on my attention.

ROYAL COMMISSIONS AND THEIR COST.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON (Shropshire, Oswestry): On behalf of the hon. Member for the Harwich Division of Essex, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can inform the House what the approximate cost has been for the past year of the various Commissions appointed by the Government?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir J. T. Hibbert, Oldham): The approximate cost in the year 1893-94 of Temporary Commissions and Committees appointed by Government was as follows:—Charged on Temporary Commissions Vote, £43,300; charged on Public Buildings Vote, £3,000—total, £46,000. In addition to this sum there is the charge on the Stationery Office Vote, as to which I have not yet received particulars, but, if desired, I will obtain the information.

FISHERMENS' RIGHTS.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he has considered the rights conferred upon fishermen under 11 Geo. 3, c. 31; and whether the Government will enforce those rights, which extend to all the coasts of the United Kingdom?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.): I am aware of the rights conferred upon fishermen by 11 Geo. 3, c. 31, and the decisions which have been pronounced with reference to that Statute. There have been differences between proprietors and fishermen as to their respective rights, and these have been decided by the Civil Courts in the ordinary way. I do not know of any case in which the intervention of the Government has been required, but if any such case is brought under the notice of the Government it will be duly considered.

Sir D. MACFARLANE: Are we to understand that the initiative in all these cases must be taken by poor fishermen, and that they must defend the rights conferred upon them by Act of Parliament?

*__Mr. J. B. BALFOUR__ was understood to say, in reply, that he was not aware that the Government had ever been asked to intervene in these disputes, which were generally as to whether certain coast lands were or were not waste and uncultivated in the sense indicated by the Statute.

KILLYBEGS PIER.

Mr. DANE (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any, and if so, what steps have been taken respecting the promised deep water pier at Killybegs, County Donegal; and when it is probable that the works in connection with it will be completed?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I am afraid that I can only answer that this matter is still under consideration of the Congested Districts Board and the Board of Works. With regard to the position of the latter Board, there are legal difficulties which are now being referred for the opinion of the Law Officers.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): When may we reasonably hope the consideration of this matter will come to an end? This consideration was promised by my right hon. Friend last September 12 months.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I am as anxious as anyone that this matter should come to an end. But there are paramount difficulties, and we cannot set to work until they are overcome.

GOODS RATES ON THE NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY.

Mr. WRIGHTSON (Stockton-on-Tees): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has now ascertained that a County Court summons, returnable on the 14th of August, has been issued by a solicitor of the North Eastern Railway Company against the North of England Pure Oilcake Company, of Stockton-on-Tees, for the recovery of £19 9s. 10d., the amount being solely for increased rates on seed from Hull to Stockton since 1893, representing an addition to the rates which ruled before that year of 5d. per ton, and which has been deducted from the Railway Company's invoices during that period pending the settlement of the Railway Rates question; and whether he will make any representation to the Railway Company on the subject?

Mr. BRYCE: Yes, Sir; I understand that a summons was issued; but, after representations made by the Board of Trade, the Railway Company have written to the Registrar asking that the action may stand over till the next Court day, which will probably be some time in October, ere which date I hope the Bill now before the House will have become law. I am glad that this result has been brought about.

SOUTH MEATH POLLING LISTS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he inquire of the South Meath Revising Barrister whether the four persons in the Summerhill polling district—Brennan, Kiernan, Darley, and Weir—were struck off the voters' list by him; were the two latter officially objected to, Weir's correct number being 746 on the 1893 list and 669 on that for 1894; has the Revising Barrister been consulted, and has he any record as to the 10 names in Trim, alleged to be wrongfully in the 1894 list, having been objected to and struck off in 1893; were the three following persons struck off the 1893 supplemental list for the Clonard polling district of South Meath—namely, Peter Conlon, Baltinoran, Michael M'Namara, Castlejordan, James Berrigan, Toor—and do they appear on the 1894 list; what materials exist in the Clerk of the Peace's office to enable these allegations to be investigated; did an *employé* named Love, in the said office, who was engaged in procuring evidence for the petitioner in the South Meath Election Petition, 1892, have anything to do with preparing or arranging the voters' lists; were the following seven persons struck off the list for the Dunshaughlin polling district of South Meath in 1893, and do they appear on the present register, namely, No. 27, Frank Behan, grounds of objection, non-residence; No. 133, Brien Carney, non-tenancy; No. 39, Pat Gallagher, non-tenancy; No. 46, John Hughes, Kilbrew, person unknown; No. 56, William Mansin, short occupation; No. 57, Pat Martin, non-tenancy; No. 91, John Whearty, non-tenancy and short occupation; and, viewing the fact that these allegations relate to three separate polling districts, and that they rest on the evidence of different agents, acting in separate Courts, will a strict inquiry be ordered?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The Revising Barrister has been communicated with as to the first three paragraphs, but up to the present I have not heard with what result. The Clerk of the Crown and Peace has reported to me as follows regarding the fourth and following paragraphs: (4.) The Revising Barrister revised the Lists of Voters in 1893, by drawing his pen through each name which he decided to remove, and writing the word "out" and placing his initials thereto. In the cases of Peter Conlon and Michael M'Namara a line is drawn through their names, but as neither the word "out" nor the initials of the Revising Barrister are entered opposite the names they were included in the Register for 1894, where they now appear. James Barrigan was officially objected to. A line was drawn through his name, but the name was re-inserted in the margin by the Revising Barrister and initialled by him. His name also appears on the Register for 1894. (5.) The Clerk of the Peace has in his custody the original lists for 1893, as revised and signed by the Barrister, and also the objection notices served on him for revision. (6.) A person named Love is employed in the manner stated in the office of the Clerk of the Peace, but I am informed he took no part whatever in getting up evidence or otherwise for the Election Petition referred to. (7.) There were no persons of the names severally mentioned in this paragraph on the lists for 1893, and they do not appear on the Register for 1894.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In view of the extraordinary discrepancies disclosed by this answer, I beg to give notice I will go further into this matter.

SACRILEGE IN KILDARE.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the church of Ballymore Eustace, County Kildare, belonging to the Church of Ireland, was, upon the night of Sunday, the 29th July, broken into, and music and other books, to the value of £5, maliciously destroyed; whether, on a previous occasion, the same church was broken into, and the sacramental plate broken and trampled upon;

and whether, as this church is in the vicinity of a police barracks, any, and if so what, steps have been taken to bring the perpetrators to justice, and to protect for the future the church and its contents?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am informed that the church was entered upon the date mentioned, and that music to the value of about 10s. was destroyed. A carpenter's saw, valued at 5s., was also injured. The occurrence is believed by the police to have been the act of some mischievous children who obtained access to the church, which was under repair, by some scaffolding. The occurrence referred to in the second paragraph took place in July, 1885. Every endeavour is being made by the police to trace the perpetrators of the recent act. The police have given every attention to the church in the past, and will continue to do so.

MALICIOUS BURNING IN FERMANAGH.

Mr. M'GILLIGAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a man named Crawford, residing in the parish of Swanlinbar, County Fermanagh, recently purchased a farm from Lord Erne, was awarded £50 damages by the Fermanagh Grand Jury for the burning of a hut a few days after the sale, which was alleged to be malicious; whether, since, certain mysterious outrages, alleged to be malicious, have been perpetrated upon cattle belonging to the same person, and for which no one has been made amenable; and whether he will instruct the Constabulary to institute a full inquiry into the details surrounding these several alleged malicious acts, with a view to bringing the perpetrators to justice?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The facts are as stated in the first paragraph; the compensation for the burning of the house on the evicted farm was granted, however, to Lord Erne, the landlord, and not to Crawford. Regarding the second paragraph, I am informed that on the 17th of July outrages were committed upon a cow belonging to Crawford and upon two other cows the property of his brother. The police have a strong suspicion as to the perpetrator of these outrages, and they have no reason to doubt that the outrages were other than malicious.

THE FERMANAGH MAGISTRACY.

Mr. M'GILLIGAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the result of his communication with the Lord Chancellor as to the promised appointments to the Magistracy in County Fermanagh; and whether, in view of the fact that the Catholics of County Fermanagh constitute 54 per cent. of the population, only one-tenth of the existing Bench are of their persuasion, he will recommend there should be no further delay in making these appointments?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Lord Chancellor informs me that he has sent papers to six gentlemen whom he proposes to place in the Commission of the Peace in the County of Fermanagh. He will be glad to consider the names of any proper persons submitted to him.

THE "COSTA RICA PACKET."

Mr. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Law Officers of the Crown have yet advised as to the acceptance or otherwise of the offer of the Government of the Hague to submit their liability, in the case of the *Costa Rica Packet*, to arbitration?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The matter is still under the consideration of the Law Officers.

NEW ROSS POSTAL MANAGEMENT.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is aware that a letter posted in Ramsgrange in the evening is delivered at Priesthaggard, three miles distant, at 10 a.m. in the second day after; if it takes two days to go three miles, owing to the departure of the rural postman from New Ross before the arrival of the Waterford mail; if a letter posted in Newbawn for Nash on Friday evening, although forwarded to New Ross on Saturday at 9.30 a.m., remains in the New Ross office until Monday morning, owing to the rural postmen leaving New Ross before the arrival of the Wexford mail; and if he will look into the postal arrangements of the New Ross district with a view to give greater satisfaction to the public?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): I will make some inquiry on these points, but it is obvious that the circumstances would not admit of direct local communication being established between small places like those mentioned, which are served from different post towns. As I stated the other day, the detention of the rural postmen at New Ross for several hours would be a serious matter.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS IN IRELAND AND FAIR WAGES.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will take the necessary measures to have carried into practical effect the Fair Wages Resolution of this House in all Irish contracts where it is now violated; and whether he will arrange that for the printing done for this House and for the Government in Ireland Trade Union wages shall be paid and boy labour allowed only in due proportion?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I am not aware of any cases in which the "Fair Wages Resolution" of the House of Commons is now being violated by contractors executing Government work for Departments under the control of the Treasury, but wherever allegations to this effect have been made I am sure my hon. Friend will bear me out when I say that I have immediately called the attention of the Department concerned to the matter, and directed them to enforce the spirit of the Resolution. As regards Government printing in Ireland, I understand that the wages paid by the contractor are the Union rates of wages for Dublin. With regard to the proportion of apprentices, Messrs. Thom state that they are ready to agree to the same proportion as prevails in large establishments in London and Edinburgh where similar work is done; and, as a matter of fact, the proportion actually employed by them is less than that prescribed by the Union authorities in London. On the whole, I am bound to say I see no evidence of anything like the sweating against which the Resolution is directed. If the hon. Gentleman has any case to which he would wish particularly to draw my attention, I will inquire into it immediately.

IRISH COUNTY COURT JUDGES.

MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): On behalf of the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the fact that County Court Judges in Ireland have not sufficient judicial work to occupy their time for more than at the outside six months each year, whether, with a view to greater economy in the Public Service in Ireland, he will take the opportunity afforded by the first vacancy in the ranks of the County Court Judges to unite the county vacated with some adjacent county?

MR. J. MORLEY: When the Act of 1877 was passed, the question was carefully considered as to what counties could be grouped consistently with public convenience, and this Act, the 40 & 41 Vict., c. 56, united a number of counties in groups for County Court jurisdiction. Further grouping might necessitate less frequent sittings in each county, and recently there has been a demand for more frequent ones.

OUTDOOR OFFICERS OF CUSTOMS.

MR. HARRINGTON: On behalf of the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Civil Service Commissioners are about to reduce the maximum age for intending candidates for the post of outdoor officer of Customs from its present limit of 25 to 21 years; and whether, as this alteration, unless after long notice, will necessarily bear harshly on those now preparing for examination under the present Rule, he will take measures to prevent the new Rule coming into force for at least another year, so as to give reasonable time to those who were preparing for examination under the present Rule, but who are now over 21 years of age, for presenting themselves for examination?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: My hon. Friend may not be aware that I answered a similar question on the 3rd instant. I will therefore ask to be allowed to hand him a copy of the answer which I then gave.

IRISH HIGH SHERIFFS.

Mr. MAINS (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the present practice in Ireland in respect of the appointment of Sheriffs is that the acting Sheriff of each county gives to the Judge of Assize three names from which the Lord Lieutenant is to select the Sheriff for the next year; and whether either the executive or the people have any further voice in such appointments?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The names in connection with the appointment of Sheriff are sent up to the Lord Lieutenant by the Judges. The usage has always been for the Lord Lieutenant to select the Sheriff from amongst the names so sent up, and such usage is laid down by the highest authority as having the force of Common Law. In the English Act of 1887 the corresponding usage in England is recognised and is made statutable. The powers of the Lord Lieutenant in the matter are, as I have shown, restricted and limited.

Mr. CARSON (Dublin University): Is this appointment a very much coveted one?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Very much to the contrary.

Mr. MAINS: I shall put a further question on Thursday.

THE DEPTFORD REFRIGERATORS.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that the refrigerating accommodation at Deptford requires to be increased; and whether he will use his influence with the London Corporation to comply with the wishes and convenience of the traders? Since I put the question on the Paper I have received a communication to the effect that the London Corporation are about to take steps to remedy the matter.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I am glad to hear that. It is a practical answer to the question. No representations with respect to the refrigerating accommodation at Deptford have recently reached me. I shall be glad to bring any communication which may be made to me on the subject under the notice of the Corporation.

THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL.

Mr. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Evicted Tenants Bill, as amended in Committee and on Report, proposes to reinstate sub-tenants; and, if so, by what clause; will a tenant in case he is reinstated thenceforth hold discharged from any sub-tenancy existing at the date of the determination of his former tenancy, or will the sub-tenant also have a right of reinstatement, and whether as against the middleman or against the head landlord; if he can state whether the 394 sub-tenants whose tenancies were determined on the 17 selected estates named in the Report of the Mathew Commission are still out of their holdings; and what (approximately) is the number of sub-tenants on the estates not specially dealt with in that Report whose tenancies have been determined since May, 1879?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Under the Bill any former tenant, whether a sub-tenant or not, comes within the language of the Bill, and may be reinstated if the Arbitrators think fit, or, as the case may be, if the new tenant consents, provided that he fulfils the other conditions of the Bill. If a tenant is reinstated the reinstatement does not restore any prior sub-tenancies. The sub-tenant in such a case could not have a right of reinstatement because the tenant who has been reinstated was his landlord, and was not on the 19th of April, 1894, in occupation of the holding. Tenants, whether immediate tenants or sub-tenants, have rights under this Bill only against the landlord from whom he himself holds.

Mr. W. KENNY: If both tenants—the middleman and the sub-tenant—claim reinstatement, will both be entitled to compensation for goodwill?

Mr. J. MORLEY: As I am advised, the Bill only applies to tenants where they are reinstated.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): In cases where the evicted tenant has had a sub-tenant who has gone out with the evicted tenant, has the sub-tenant no claim to reinstatement?

Mr. J. MORLEY: No, Sir; I think not.

BALLYGURTEEN POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

Mr. FIELD: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will make arrangements that Rossmore and the district to Ballygurteen be served from Ballyneen, instead of from Geragh, as requested by an extensively signed Memorial forwarded on the 12th of May, and also as asked by the Constabulary authorities showing that the change would greatly facilitate them in the discharge of their duties; and whether those interested in local markets have also pointed out that the proposed change would not increase the present cost of service?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I have received from the hon. Member a copy of the Memorial referred to, and it was addressed to the Secretary of the Post Office in Dublin. It would not necessarily come before me; but I have called for information on the subject.

GNARLFORD NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. BALDWIN (Worcester, Bewdley): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he has considered the representations made by the managers of the Gnarlford National Schools; and if the Department intends to insist on the enlargement and alterations of the schools being carried out, although the parish is constantly decreasing in population?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): The managers of this school were informed in the last Annual Report that the class-room (which is only 9½ feet wide) was too narrow, and that the offices were insufficient, and were requested to submit proposals for enlarging the class-room. They replied, stating that the offices should be improved during the summer holidays, and asking that the class-room might continue to be recognised. There are 31 infants on the books, who cannot be properly taught in so narrow a room. I hope the managers will see their way to provide a suitable room. If they will undertake to do so they will not be unduly pressed in the matter of time.

DUBLIN TELEGRAPHISTS' GRIEVANCES.

Mr. SWEETMAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether some Dublin telegraphists have recently been asked to accept a rate of 3s. a day for duty on coast stations, in connection with the Naval Manœuvres, although a much larger sum has hitherto been given for such duties; whether he is aware that these men complain that they cannot live on an allowance of 3s. a day in a crowded seaport town when they are there only for a short time; and whether it is the practice of the Post Office to pay as low wages as competition will enable them, or to pay a living wage?

Mr. A. MORLEY: In accordance with the practice which obtains both in Ireland and in this country the telegraphists sent from Dublin to Coast Stations in connection with the Naval Manœuvres have been informed that they will be paid 3s. a day, except in the case of a few stations where the cost of living will be enhanced, and there the rate may be 4s., or even 5s., a day. Last year one of the Dublin telegraphists, who was paid 5s. a day, complained that it was not enough, and asked for 12s., but, on inquiry, it appeared that the complaint was not well founded. With reference to the latter part of the hon. Member's question, I may explain that the payments are not wages, but are allowances in addition to wages.

COUNTY CLARE MAIL CART SERVICE.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether arrangements have yet been made for the new mail cart service between Ardsalus and Tulla, County Clare?

Mr. A. MORLEY: The question of establishing such a service is now being considered, and I will let the hon. Member know my decision as soon as it can be arrived at.

Mr. W. REDMOND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the people of the district only ask for one cart to meet the train which brings the English letters?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I do not know the facts.

ELEMENTARY TEACHERS—SUPERANNUATION.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the Departmental Committee on the Superannuation Scheme of Elementary Teachers will submit its Report before Parliament rises for the Recess?

Mr. ACLAND: The Departmental Committee on the Superannuation of Elementary Teachers will not report before the Recess. But its main proposals have been decided upon, and it will report in November to the Treasury and the Education Department.

NORTH-EAST COAST SCOTCH FISHERIES.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether arrangements will be made in next year's Estimates to provide the Fishery Board with a cruiser for the protection of the fishing industry on the North-East Coast of Scotland?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The Fishery Board of Scotland have now, with the recent addition of the new steam cruiser, two steamers engaged in the protection of the fishing industry, one on the East and one on the West Coast of Scotland, all the year round, besides the assistance of several of Her Majesty's gunboats during the summer fishing season. The new steam cruiser, the purchase of which has been provided for in this year's Estimates, has already done good service in the prevention and detection of illegal trawling, and it is not proposed at present to provide the Fishery Board with another such vessel.

In answer to a further question put by Mr. Weir,

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that four trawlers had been brought in in a very short space of time—a record not beaten in any other part of the British Islands. He would see that the service was kept up to the mark.

Mr. W. Redmond

THE BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that public business is being dispatched more rapidly than was anticipated when he made his statement on the 18th ultimo, arrangements will now be made to carry the Crofters' Act Amendment Bill this Session, in fulfilment of the pledges repeatedly made by the Liberal Leaders prior to and during the last General Election?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I have already said that if this is an unopposed Bill it may be proceeded with. It must depend on whether the Bill is opposed or not.

Sir D. MACFARLANE: May I ask whether, in case circumstances prevent the Bill being brought in this year, and in consideration of the postponement of the Bill being consented to for this Session, the right hon. Gentleman will give a pledge to bring the Bill on early next year, when the Report of the Deer Forest Commission will be available, on which an enlarged Bill might be founded?

Mr. WEIR: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that question, may I ask him whether we are to abandon all hope of the Bill being passed this Session?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I cannot advise anyone to abandon all hope. It does not rest with me. As to enlarged pledges for next Session, I am not in a position at present to make them.

***Dr. MACGREGOR** (Inverness-shire): Arising out of that answer, I wish to ask whether Scottish legislation must ever be dragged like this at the heels of England? Is it because of the meekness and submission of the majority of the Scotch Members, who are evidently afraid to say "bo" to a goose? Some of us have called attention to this matter in every mortal way, from the quoting of Scripture to the verge of physical exhaustion.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Dr. MACGREGOR: By way of personal explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Subsequently,

***Dr. MACGREGOR** said: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my regret that for pressing for a small measure of justice for my constituents I should be considered in this House as out of Order. I do not ask for the passing of this Bill as a favour; I demand it as a right on the part of my constituents. I hope I am not out of Order in saying that, Mr. Speaker. [*Cries of* "Order!"] Who says "Order"? Allow me to say that the Government have been pledged for two years to concede the very Bill which we are now fighting for. At the end of two years I think it extremely improper so to use the Highland Representatives.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

***DR. MACGREGOR**: I wish to give another notice on the subject—that if this Bill is not passed this Session I shall next Session do everything in my power to block every Government measure that may be introduced, from those mentioned in the Queen's Speech downwards.

THE PAYMENT OF MEMBERS.

MR. WOODS (Lancashire, S.E., Ince): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the Resolution passed by the House of Commons last year on the question of payment of Members, the Government intend giving effect to that Resolution by introducing a Bill in the next Session dealing with the question?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope we may be able to do so.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

MR. WOODS: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, with a view of meeting the convenience of Members interested in the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, he can state to the House about the probable time when the Bill is likely to be discussed in its Committee stage?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope we shall be able to reach that next Monday.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): The question is as to the probable time that will be given to the Committee stage, not as to the time at which the Committee stage will begin.

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have answered the question as it was put—and as I understood it—the probable time at which the Bill is likely to be discussed; as to how long it will be discussed, I cannot offer an opinion.

POLLUTION OF THE RIVER EYE.

THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY (Leicestershire, Melton): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to a meeting of the Melton Mowbray Rural Sanitary Authority on the 26th of July, held at Melton, when statements were made, describing the condition of the River Eye at Asfordby, to the effect that at that place the river was so polluted by sewage from Melton that some 10,000 fish were lying dead in the water; that the stench was absolutely unbearable; that all persons residing near the river at Asfordby who could do so were leaving their homes in consequence; and that the Medical Officers of Health testified that this condition of affairs constituted a grave and immediate danger to the inhabitants of the district; whether he is aware that at the meeting in question it was stated that application had been made to the Local Government Board for sanction to a scheme for dealing with the Melton sewage at the beginning of May last, but that no reply had been sent to this request by the Local Government Board; will he explain why, although the clerk of the Leicestershire County Council and the Rev. Canon Cartmell, Rector of Asfordby, have written to the Local Government Board on this matter, nothing but bare acknowledgments of their letters have been received by them; and whether, if this is so, he will cause inquiry to be made into the cause of these delays, and will take immediate steps to assist the Melton Local Board to deal with the circumstances of the case?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): I have not received any Report of the proceedings of the Melton Mowbray Rural Sanitary Authority at the meeting referred to. The facts are not as stated in the question. The Local Government Board, after a visit to the district by one of their Inspectors, wrote to the Melton Mowbray Local Board in April, 1893, pointing out that the condition of things as regards the treatment and disposal of the sewage of the district was most unsatisfactory, and should not be allowed to continue, and requesting that they would deal with the matter without delay. The Local Government Board communicated with the Local Board in June, in August, and in October of last year, and in January and February of the present year, and again on the 5th of May, as to what they were intending to do in the matter. It was not until the 18th of May that the Board were informed of the works proposed, and received an application for sanction to a loan. Further details as to the works being required, the Local Board were asked on the 4th of June for further particulars, and they were at the same time informed that a local inquiry by one of the Board's Inspectors had been directed. The particulars asked for were received on the 21st of July, and it was then stated that it was also intended to make application for a loan for additional land and for sewer extension. On the 26th of July the Board wrote, stating that an inquiry in respect of the previous application had been fixed for the 8th of August, and that particulars of the further proposals should at once be furnished if it was desired that the application should be considered at the same inquiry. The further particulars were received on the 28th of July, and the notices for the inquiry were issued on the 1st of August. The letter of the Rev. Canon Cartmell was received on the 25th of July, and the Board on the following day communicated with the Local Board. The Board have not received any communication from the County Council on the subject.

The Marquess of GRANBY: Then does the inquiry take place to-morrow?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I believe it does.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will propose an Amendment to Standing Order 183A, whereby it is provided that promoters of Private Bills shall not, in exercise of any power of taking lands, purchase or acquire houses occupied by persons belonging to the labouring class without making provisions for rehousing such persons, by inserting after the word "acquire" the words "and demolish," in order that in cases where (as, for instance, under Section 93 of "The Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845,") promoters are obliged to acquire, but have no occasion to demolish, the labouring class occupiers may remain undisturbed, and the promoters may not be obliged to erect unnecessary new dwellings?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I do not contemplate proposing that the Standing Order referred to should be altered. It is the practice of the Local Government Board in determining the accommodation that should be provided by schemes submitted to them under provisions in accordance with the Standing Order to take into consideration the number of houses which the Company or Authority may propose to acquire but do not intend to demolish.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY: Have not cases occurred in which promoters have been obliged to provide artisans dwelling, although none have been displaced?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I believe that is so, but at the same time I do not think it desirable to alter the Standing Order.

THE VENTILATION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that the air (sewer gas) from the main drain is aspirated through the whole length of the system, from the Victoria Tower to the Clock Tower; whether any re-modelling of the drainage has taken place since the Select Committee on House of Commons (Ventilation) sat in 1891; and, if so, will he state what has been done; whether it is the fact that in 1891 furnaces in the exhaust shafts were kept burning day and night throughout the year as at the present time, and that, notwithstanding, down draughts did then, and do now, occur occasionally in the vitiated air shaft; whether he is aware that during close warm weather, owing to the slight difference of temperature between the outside and inside of the main extract shaft, and also in consequence of the long distance the vitiated air has to be drawn horizontally, there is scarcely any appreciable current upwards in that shaft; and that there is a tendency for the vitiated air and sewer gas, under the conditions mentioned, to find their way from the Clock Tower shaft down through the Ladies' and Reporters'

Galleries into the Chamber to feed the fire in the other shaft when it is burning more brightly; and whether, having regard to the fact that the sewer gas from the drainage of the Houses of Parliament is wholly discharged into one of the shafts which receive the vitiated air from the Chamber, and is, therefore, a source of danger to the Members and officials of the House, he will consider the desirability of having the sewer gas discharged by a separate shaft or pipe entirely apart from the ventilating shaft of the Chamber, as suggested by Mr. Binnie, engineer to the London County Council for the Westminster main drain, and as recommended by Mr. James Keith, C.E., and other experts?

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The main drain is aspirated, not from the Victoria Tower to the Clock Tower, but from the Clock Tower to the Victoria Tower. There is, however, a minor drain which is ventilated in the other direction. No remodelling of the drainage has taken place since the Select Committee on Ventilation sat in 1891. The furnaces in the exhaust shafts were kept burning day and night throughout the year in 1891, and have continued to be so kept down to the present time. No down draughts have occurred, or could occur, in these shafts since the continuous full burning of the furnaces was adopted. As I have already said, the sewer gas from the drainage of the Houses of Parliament is principally discharged into a shaft in the Victoria Tower which has no connection with the shafts which receive the vitiated air from this Chamber. The shafts proposed by the engineer to the London County Council and the other experts who gave evidence in 1891 were intended to ventilate the main sewers of the district, and had no reference to the ventilation of the drains of the Houses of Parliament.

MR. WEIR was understood to ask if there was any intention to arrange for the sewer gas to be discharged by pipe instead of by the up-cast shaft. Was it not the fact that the engineer of the House in 1891 stated that down draughts might occasionally occur and vitiate the air in the shaft?

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend is mistaken in the construction he puts on the evidence. No defect in the present system has been proved to exist, and I see no reason to make any change.

MR. WEIR pressed the right hon. Gentleman to carefully study the evidence.

CHAILEY COMMON.

MR. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a quantity of common land belonging to Chailey Common, in the County of Sussex, has been enclosed; whether it is the duty of the Sussex County Council to take some action to maintain the rights of the inhabitants; and whether, failing such action on their part, it can be taken by the Local Government Board or the Board of Agriculture?

MR. H. GARDNER: I have been informed by a correspondent that enclosures have been made on Chailey Common within the past two or three years, but I have no means of verifying this information or of interfering to prevent such enclosures, if they have taken place. I can only state that anything which has been done has not been with the consent of the Board of Agriculture. With regard to the maintenance of rights of common by public authorities I may refer my hon. Friend to the provisions contained in Section 26 of the Local Government Act of last Session, which I trust will be found sufficient to prevent encroachments on, or the illegal enclosure of, commons.

MR. BYLES: The point I desire to know is whether, in case the County Council refuse to act, there is any duty laid upon the Minister of the Board of Agriculture to act instead?

MR. H. GARDNER: The Board have no power to take the initiative; that must be taken by the commoners themselves.

ST. JAMES'S SCHOOL, PADDINGTON.

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): On behalf of the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of Her Majesty's Inspector on the St. James's National School, Craven Terrace, Paddington, for the year ending January, 1894, which states that two of the classrooms are so far below the minimum size required by Rule 7 (a) of the Schedule that they can no longer be recognised as providing accommodation; what is the reduction of accommodation resulting from this intimation; whether the Department have communicated this decision to the London School Board; and, if not, whether they will at once do so; and whether, in all cases where the Department find it necessary to review and reduce the accommodation of a school, they will at once inform the Local Educational Authority of such alteration, in order that their record of the available accommodation of the district may be correct?

Mr. ACLAND: The two class-rooms in question were each 13 feet by 8, and the nominal accommodation of the school has been reduced by 27 places. It has not, I understand, been the practice hitherto to inform the Local Educational Authority in cases of this kind, but I think it is right that they should be so informed, and I have given directions accordingly.

THE CASE OF BULWANT RAO BUTE.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the case of one Bulwant Rao Bute, who was killed under circumstances of great brutality within British jurisdiction in the Gwalior State by Asad Jar Khan, the Superintendent of Police of the Indore State, and two of his subordinates, with the assistance of other persons; whether he is aware that these officers of the Indore State were tried by a special Judge and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment, the Judge expressing his opinion that Asar Jar Khan, the Superintendent of the Indore Police, had bribed the Gwalior Police to assist him in the perpetration of the crime; whether he is aware that the widow of Bulwant Rao has, for the benefit of herself and family, repeatedly urged her claim to compensation from the Indore State for the slaughter of her husband, but without success; and whether Her Majesty's Government, through the Government of India, will take steps to secure that proper compensation is paid by the Indore State for the crime planned and committed by the chief of its Police Department?

***The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA** (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The facts of this case are given in Parliamentary Paper No. 80 of 1893. The statement as to Asad Jar will be found in the Paper. He was convicted of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, and sentenced to 14 years' rigorous imprisonment and fine. I have no information as to the widow's claim for compensation, but will inquire.

IRISH PRISON ADMINISTRATION.

Mr. HARRINGTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in consequence of the numerous complaints relating to the present system of management in Irish prisons, he will cause the inquiry at present held in England to be extended to Ireland?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Committee of Inquiry referred to in the question of the hon. and learned Gentleman is a purely Departmental Committee appointed by the Home Office to inquire into the administration of English prisons, and it was stated by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on May 28 last that the Inquiry would not extend to Ireland.

EX-PRISON WARDER BARRETT.

Mr. HARRINGTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if Barrett, into whose case he ordered a further inquiry, has since been refused admission to the prisons service except on terms which he felt bound to refuse; and if it is the intention of the Government to have him reinstated in his former position and, in consideration of the harsh treatment he received, grant him compensation?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Barrett sent in his resignation as prison warder in May, 1892. It is true that he was recently offered re-employment in the Prisons Service, but the conditions which he asked should attach to his re-engagement were not such as could be acceded to by the Executive. After a very careful investigation of all the facts of the case, the decision arrived at was that if re-appointed to the Prisons Service it could only be on the terms attaching to a new appointment. But Barrett declined to accept employment on these terms, and the Government see no reasons for altering the decision arrived at.

MR. HARRINGTON: Is it not a fact that this officer had eight or nine years' service in the Prison Service, and was recommended for promotion; that he stood for examination as a convict warder and failed; and that instead of getting the benefit of his eight or nine years' service, or being remitted to the district for which he had been recommended for promotion, he was dismissed for no fault except that of failure to pass the examination?

MR. J. MORLEY: I went into the facts of the case, and my decision was that if he were restored it could only be on the condition that he came in as a fresh officer. I felt that his claim for salary and compensation for past service was beyond what was fair and reasonable. I think what I decided fully met the justice of the case.

MR. HARRINGTON: Then was it meant to allow him nothing for past service?

MR. J. MORLEY: He had no legal claim whatever to back pay or compensation, he having resigned his appointment by his own act in 1892.

FIJI.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any Despatch has yet been received from the Governor of Fiji with respect to the recent native outbreak in that Colony; and, if so, does the Despatch acknowledge that the fatal disturbance originated in disaffection with the present scheme of native taxation?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): No Despatch on the subject referred to by the hon. Member has yet been received.

ATTACKS ON IRISH HAYMAKERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of John Hanreharty, haymaker, a native of County Louth, Ireland, who was sentenced by H. E. C. Stapylton, Colonel Trotter, and C. H. Cock, at Barnet Petty Sessions, on 23rd July, to three weeks' imprisonment with hard labour without the option of a fine, and of several of his fellow-workmen, also natives of Ireland, who were fined by the same Justices; whether he is aware that the Justices who tried these men stated that the landlord of the "Red Lion," where the disturbance took place, should have been present to give evidence, and that they did not adjourn the case to enable him to attend; whether he is aware that the sergeant of police in his evidence stated that "These Irishmen coming into the district are a nuisance, and more of them arrive every year," and that the police constable on arresting them said, "You Irish——! We have you now, and we'll punish you"; whether he is aware that these haymakers have been brought specially from Ireland for a number of successive years by the same farmer who attended at the trial and testified to the steadiness, diligence, sobriety, and trustworthiness of Hanreharty and his fellow-workmen; whether he is aware that it was proved that these Irish haymakers were going quietly home when they were attacked by a number of loafers outside the "Red Lion"; whether he is aware that Patrick Shields, one of the men who were fined, was taken from his bed at 2 o'clock on Sunday morning to the police station, in spite of the fact that, having been ill during the day, he had retired for the night and before the disturbance took place; whether he will state why none of the Englishmen who were the aggressors were fined or imprisoned; and whether, having regard to the circumstances of the case, he will recommend the liberation of Hanreharty, and cause inquiry to be made into the case, and especially into the evidence of the police sergeant and the statement of the police constable?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I am informed that, after hearing the evidence at Barnet Petty Sessions on July 23, the Chairman asked at what public-house the prisoners had obtained their drink, when Mr. Reid replied that he had heard that they had been at the Lion, Potter's Bar, when the disturbance commenced. The chairman then said—

> "The landlord should have been present, as the disturbance is said to have originated in his house."

But neither of the prisoners corroborated the statement made by Mr. Reid, nor was any suggestion made for an adjournment of the case in order that the landlord should attend. The disturbance did not take place at the public-house. The sergeant of police did not give evidence, but, in answer to a question by the Chairman, said—

> "They are Irishmen, and belong to a class of men employed as haymakers by the farmers in the neighbourhood. Several disturbances have occurred at Potter's Bar lately; they are a great annoyance, and there seem to be more of them come every year."

The police constables who arrested the men emphatically deny having used the words:—

> "You Irish ——! We have you now, and we'll punish you."

What they did say to the other men when they arrested Hanreharty and Thomas M'Court was, "We will come back after you." I understand that the farmer employing these men gave them a good character. No evidence was taken as to the origin of the disturbance. Patrick Shields was not taken from his bed; he was found with others at 1 a.m. lying on some hay in a shed in a field on Mr. Reid's farm, and he was identified as one of the men who stoned the police. Shields did not say he had been ill during the day, and had retired before the disturbance took place. When the first disturbance took place the police dispersed them, and the two parties left in different directions; no arrest would have been made had not Hanreharty and his companions renewed the disturbance by quarrelling amongst themselves and assaulting and stoning the police; Hanreharty having also threatened the police with a knife. I regret that I do not see any sufficient ground for my interference. I have made full and careful inquiry into the case, with the result that the statement which I have made to the House appears to me accurately to represent the facts.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked how the right hon. Gentleman explained the fact that the police only arrested the Irishmen who had been assaulted by the English party, and why were not the English party arrested?

Mr. ASQUITH said, that did not tally with the account he had received. They appeared to be quarrelling amongst themselves, and the police said to the remainder of the crowd, "We will come back for you." The crowd had dispersed before the police had any opportunity of making further arrests. He did not think there was any evidence, so far as he could make out, that the police acted with anything like partiality. If they had discriminated between Englishmen and Irishmen in the matter they would have left themselves open to very grave censure.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it not a fact that these Irishmen had for years been employed by a farmer in the district, and that they bear an excellent character?

Mr. ASQUITH: It is quite true the farmer gave the men a good character. However, I find that Hanreharty was sent to prison for threatening to assault the police with a knife.

Mr. WEIR: Is it not a fact that the man referred to was cutting a cake of tobacco when the police interfered; and would the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiries into the case, as I believe that the information now given to the House is undoubtedly incorrect? Will he inquire, for instance, whether it is a fact that Patrick Shields was laying on a bed of hay—not on a bed of linen, no doubt—and why he was taken from the place where he was sleeping?

Mr. ASQUITH: I think my hon. Friend and myself are at one on the facts as to Patrick Shields. He was found laying on some hay in a shed on Monday morning and he was arrested, having been identified as one of the party who assaulted the police.

Mr. WEIR: Did not the shed in which he was found contain the beds prepared for him and his brother Irishmen to sleep in at night time? Will care be taken that Irishmen shall have some measure of justice meted out to them, and not to be treated in this brutal fashion by the police?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Why did not the police summon the man instead of taking him at 1 o'clock in the morning out of what was his bed?

Mr. ASQUITH: Whether they did rightly or wrongly—and the Magistrates found they did rightly—it is quite in accordance with the practice.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The police could find the Irishmen, but they could not find the Englishmen.

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): As it is stated in the question that the Irishmen were going quietly home when they were attacked, and as the right hon. Gentleman in his reply admits that there is no information in his possession as to the origin of the disturbance, which appears to be a very material point, I would ask him to inquire as to how the disturbance began, in order to determine whether the Irishmen, who alone have been punished, were solely or primarily at fault.

MR. ASQUITH: I will make further inquiries; the result might be to show that other persons are guilty.

MR. SEXTON: If it be found that other persons were the aggressors, should that not qualify the amount of the punishment?

MR. ASQUITH: I have no evidence to point to that state of things.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to the fact that a party of Irish haymakers were set fire to in Lancashire last month by an English mob?

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this farmer, who is an Englishman, has engaged these men year after year for 16 years, and spoke of them in the highest terms of their general character? Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiries?

MR. ASQUITH: I have answered that question already. I have not heard of the alleged case in Lancashire, but I will inquire as to that. I can only repeat what I have said before—namely, that I will see that impartial justice is meted out as between Englishmen and Irishmen.

THE ACCOUNTANT GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when the Report of the Committee on the Accountant General's Department will be published for the information of the gentlemen immediately concerned?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee) (who replied) said: This Report is nearly complete, and will be in the hands of the Admiralty very shortly. Any decisions affecting the future of the staff cannot be made known to them until the Report has been considered by the Admiralty.

ROYAL VICTORIA YARD, DEPTFORD.

MR. DARLING (Deptford): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether six permanent day coopers employed in the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford, have had their wages reduced from 30s. to 26s. weekly, and whether these men's pensions will be calculated on a higher rate than their present weekly pay?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: There are no permanent day coopers at Deptford. Every man who wishes, and is qualified, has his turn at piecework. There has been no reduction of wages. The rate of 30s. was paid for some time in consequence of a mistake in an Admiralty Letter to the yard. When the mistake was discovered the authorised rate of 26s. was resumed. The rate assumed cannot be higher than the actual earnings.

VENTILATION OF COMMITTEE ROOM No. 10.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that many Members of the Scotch Standing Committee have suffered greatly from the defective ventilation of Committee Room No. 10 during the present Session; and whether he will take steps during the Recess to improve the ventilation of that room?

*MR. H. GLADSTONE: No complaints have reached me, but I will inquire into the matter; and meanwhile I refer the hon. Member to the Report of the Select Committee on the Accommodation of the House, which has a bearing on this question.

ARMY OFFICERS' DEBTS IN INDIA.

MR. FIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will take into consideration the difficulty of recovering debts from Army officers in India, and alter the Rule at present in force and allow the India Office to give the addresses of the officers when they come home on leave, as this is the only opportunity a trader has of recovering the debt?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: The present Rule was laid down by my predecessors in accordance with the practice of the War Office, and I am not prepared to interfere in the matter.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE IN INDIA.

SIR D. MACFARLANE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the recent Return, entitled "East India (Military Expenditure)," and dated India Office, 8th June, 1894, whether he is aware that there is no such general heading as "Military Expenditure" in the Finance and Revenue Accounts of the Government of India; and that there are three distinct headings under which Military Expenditure is shown in the Indian Accounts—namely, "Army Services," "Military Works," and "Special Defence Works"; on what ground in the above-mentioned Return has the general heading "Military Expenditure" been used when the Return has reference only to "Army Services," and why, if this Return was intended to apply to "Army Services" only, has not the usual heading in the Indian Accounts—namely, "Army Services," been retained; whether the figures for gross expenditure on Army Services, as shown in the above-mentioned Return, are affected by the casual purchases of extra stores—*i.e.*, stores which are afterwards sold as surplus stores; whether, during the 18 years covered by the Return, the increase in net Army Expenditure has been Rx.7,910,271, or nearly Rx.200,000 more than the increase in gross expenditure shown in the Return; whether it is to be inferred from the form of the Return that over Rx.11,000,000 of exceptional Military Expenditure has, during the last eight years, been distributed under the ordinary headings of "Army Services" in the Indian Accounts; whether he will grant a Return showing, for the last 10 years, the ordinary expenditure and the exceptional payments under their respective headings of the Government of India on "Army Services"; and whether Her Majesty's Government will represent to the Government of India the inconvenience of keeping the accounts in such a form that exceptional payments are habitually included under ordinary headings of account, and so made to produce a fictitious fluctuation in what is classed as ordinary expenditure?

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: My answer to the first question is, Yes. In reply to the second question, the reason is that the term "Military Expenditure" was used in my hon. Friend's notice given on the 16th of April, and it was understood to mean "Army Services." The answer to the third question is, Yes. The variation in the regular (not casual) purchases of stores is shown, on page 6 of the Return, to have been from a maximum of Rx.1,154,000 in 1887-8 to a minimum of Rx.462,000. The fourth question correctly states the fact, the reason being that the receipts in 1875-6 were higher by Rx.193,057 than in 1892-3. With regard to the fifth question, the exceptional payments shown on page 4 of the Return amounted to Rx.11,032,781 during the last eight years. Of this about Rx.6,073,500 is the extra expenditure incurred in Burma. The remainder (except "mobilisation" in 1889-90) is included under the head "Miscellaneous Services." In the Indian Financial Statement laid before Parliament each year the amount due to special expeditions is stated. The Return asked for in the sixth question cannot be compiled in England, and it would be little more than a division of the extra expenditure in Burma under the various heads. As to the seventh question, the head "Miscellaneous Services" is used generally for the purpose of including exceptional items which cannot be conveniently classed under the other heads. The amount due to special campaigns, &c., could be shown under a sub-head, if desired, as it is shown in the Return.

Sir D. MACFARLANE: I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to an article, at page 247 of the current number of *India*, on Indian Military Expenditure; and whether the figures which are given in the table at page 248 of the same paper, showing that net Indian Military Expenditure has increased by Rx.7,106,511 during the last eight years out of a total increase of Rx.8,198,596 for the last 18 years, are correct?

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: The figures are correct, but it must be remembered (1) that Military Works, which are now included under the head of "Military Expenditure," were not so included eight years ago; and (2) that a part of the increase is the necessary result of the fall in exchange as affecting military pay.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton): May I ask when the Local Government (Scotland) Bill will be taken?

SIR W. HARCOURT: We had hoped that the Equalisation of Rates Bill would have been finished last night, but, failing that, it must be taken first on Wednesday. The Scotch Bill will also be put down for that day.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square): I presume the Equalisation of Rates Bill will be the first Order to-morrow?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Yes. The Building Societies Bill, which will only occupy a few minutes, will be taken after the Equalisation of Rates Bill, which we hope will not take a very long time.

SIR D. MACFARLANE: Suppose the Equalisation of Rates Bill takes the whole of to-morrow, will the Scotch Bill have the first place on Thursday?

SIR W. HARCOURT: Should the two Bills I have mentioned take the whole of to-morrow, which I do not contemplate they will, the Scotch Local Government Bill will be taken on Thursday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) ARBITRATION BILL, *changed to* TENANTS ARBITRATION (IRELAND) BILL.

(No. 346.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir R. T. REID, Dumfries, &c.) said, he would move to amend the title of the Bill by inserting after the word "(Ireland)" the words "Migration and," so as to make it read "The Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Migration and Arbitration Bill."

Amendment agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

MR. BRODRICK (Surrey, Guildford) said, he rose to move that the Bill be read a third time that day three months. He had not risen at once, because he had hoped that the Chief Secretary, in moving the Third Reading of the Bill, would have given the House some means of judging to what extent the speech of the right hon. Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) the other night had influenced the Government. Nobody having regard to the course of proceedings on the Bill could be surprised at a Motion for its rejection coming from the Opposition side of the House, though he very much regretted it should be necessary to make it. He should have been glad if the Chief Secretary, looking to the position in which they found themselves, had been able to make some communication to the House which would have placed them in possession of the most recent views of the Government. On the last occasion on which effective Debate on the Bill took place—for he entirely excluded the two or three days of discussion which the right hon. Gentleman had enjoyed without the presence of the Members of the Opposition—they had addressed to them by the Member for Bodmin an eloquent, well-weighed, and earnest appeal to save the Bill. That appeal was addressed to both sides of the House, but he would point out that it only affected the Government. If there was anything to be done towards saving the Bill it was not the Opposition who had to do it. The Opposition had never had any part or parcel in the Bill. They had nothing to do with its preparation, and they were not responsible for what was contained in it, and obviously, from their point of view, besides the compulsory clauses, the measure contained very much that was open to objection. On that point he would say something presently; but in referring to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin, he trusted he might be excused if he said a word on behalf of a body of gentlemen to whom he had addressed something that was more than the remonstrance and warning which he addressed to other Members of the House. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, referred to what he called "a junta of irreconcilable landlords," on whom he laid practically the whole blame for the present difference between Parties in that House on this subject, and addressed to them what was more a scolding than a remonstrance. He said—

"We are in this situation, not only in respect to the Bill itself, but also as to the way it is conducted—that the true conduct has passed from those who know to the less-informed as well as less responsible class of Members. Whereas we had the evidence and the testimony of people who had the conduct of the Government in their hands on the one side, we have now on the other got a junta of irresponsible landlords putting their power on those who ought to resist them."

Those words had been loudly cheered by all sides of the House, and he had no reason to think that hon. Members in the least receded from those cheers. He did not think, in the circumstances, that it would have been very difficult to have arrived at some arrangement or compromise in connection with the subject. He (Mr. Brodrick) would not consent to sit down under the imputation that the Irish landlords or any other class of persons had dictated to the Opposition the course to be taken in regard to this Bill. If there had been any departure from sound policy, if there had been any falling back from good citizenship in this matter, if there had been any introduction of private interests, it was not on that side of the House. They must search for it in other quarters. If they wanted to appreciate the present position in which they stood that night—and he admitted it was a critical position—they must look back to the past history of this Bill. Why was it pressed upon them at this moment? It was pressed upon them by the Chief Secretary on the grounds of urgency and of expediency. But what were the facts with regard to this urgency? The hon. Member for Waterford made a speech to his constituents as early as August or September, 1892, in which he declared that it was the duty of the Government to call Parliament together in the autumn to deal with an Evicted Tenants Bill. Instead of doing that the Government appointed the Mathew Commission, which body reported in February, 1893. In March, 1893, a measure was introduced by hon. Members below the Gangway to deal with the evicted tenants. That brought the subject into notice, and the Chief Secretary, with certain reservations, supported the Bill. Before the Question was put from the Chair on that occasion the hon. Member for Kerry rose in his place and explained in justification of the Closure Motion, which he (Mr. Brodrick) believed the hon. Member moved, that the matter was urgent. It was a matter, he said, which would affect large classes of tenants in Ireland, and which was so urgent that the House should not delay even for a few weeks dealing with it. There was no doubt what was the opinion as to urgency on the Benches below the Gangway; but was that opinion shared by the Chief Secretary and the Government? Parliament sat for 12 months after that, and not an effort was made to give effect to the strong feeling on the Benches below the Gangway by giving a day for the further discussion of the measure. Parish Councils were declared urgent, Employers' Liability was urgent, various other small measures to which days were devoted were urgent, but the question of evicted tenants in Ireland was not urgent, and did not assume urgency during the last Session of Parliament, which lasted up to March of the present year. Then they came to 1894. It was true that early in the Session—that was to say, on the 19th of April—the Chief Secretary introduced this Bill, but he gave them no idea of its urgency on that occasion. It took its place in the general scramble—with the Registration Bill, the Local Veto Bill, the Welsh Disestablishment Bill, and all the other Bills for which there was a scramble at the end of the Session. He would test the Chief Secretary's plea of urgency by what he considered an infallible test. The Finance Bill had precedence, but there was an interval of one week between the Committee stage and Report. What did the Government do in that week? All that week was given, for the first time in Parliamentary history at so early a period of the Session, to the discussion of Army Estimates, though at that time the Secretary of State for War had enough money to last him until October. On July 18 the Bill assumed a sudden urgency. Vigorous speeches had been made against it on the Second Reading, to which very little reply was given by Her Majesty's Government. Obvious defects in the measure were pointed out. The fact that it dealt with every householder in Ireland who had been evicted, as well as every landholder, was pointed out. No reply was forthcoming. The Chief Secretary shook his head, but he (Mr. Brodrick) would put it to him, had he attempted to justify the provisions of the Bill? The Bill was absolutely riddled by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University. ["Oh!"] Yes, everyone on the Benches below the Gangway knew that the Bill was absolutely riddled by the right hon. and learned Member.

AN IRISH MEMBER: We are not fools.

MR. BRODRICK said, there was not one Member sitting on the Benches below the Gangway who would not have risen to defend the Bill had he had a place on the Front Ministerial Bench after its condemnation by the Member for the University of Dublin. On the Committee stage they were allowed two nights, and then the Closure was rigidly enforced. Presented in this way he thought the case for urgency was an extraordinarily weak one. When they came to look at the scope of the Bill he could not help asking why, if the Chief Secretary had been in earnest in pressing upon the House this measure as vital to the peace and order of Ireland during the winter, he had not restricted the Bill within the narrowest limits which he thought were likely to attain his object in order to get it through Parliament. He had done nothing of the kind. Why during all these months did he not take some means of ascertaining the view of those without whose cooperation he could not expect to get this Bill through without a long struggle? The Member for Bodmin talked of compromise, but why was that not in the mind of the Chief Secretary months ago? Had any communication passed with this side of the House? Until the speech of that right hon. Gentleman no attempt at conciliation had been made with the Opposition in regard to this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin had said—

> "He felt that it was desirable, urgent, and necessary to deal in some way with the cloud of evicted tenants who were found in a landless and workless condition near the places where they once dwelt and worked; and, to his mind, their necessity was an abiding evil."

But was this Bill restricted to tenants who had been evicted? On the first night in Committee the Chief Secretary and the Law Officers were forced to confess that the Bill had been so drawn that every tenancy that had been determined during the last 15 years was one on which a tenant might claim reinstatement. It was possible under the Bill as it stood now—as it was presented to the House for Third Reading—that a tenant who had sold his holding for 20 years' purchase of his rent might claim to come back under the conditions imposed by the Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He might claim the Bank of England, but would he be likely to get it?

MR. BRODRICK said, that in the case he was referring to the thing was quite possible. What had the hon. and learned Member for Louth done last night? He moved an Amendment to empower the Commissioners to compensate an evicted tenant who had established himself in business and did not desire to leave it. The hon. Member said—

> "There were not many cases of the kind he sought to meet by his Amendment, but there might be a few, in which the former tenant might have set up in business at a considerable distance away from the holding, having formed new relations, and might be willing to give up the goodwill of the holding on receiving a certain sum. Something ought to be given to a former tenant for his goodwill, even if he was not anxious to return to his old holding."

MR. T. M. HEALY said, it was true he wished to provide for a few cases of widows and orphans. There would be a few people—a very few—who, on account of their position, might desire to receive a sum of money for the goodwill. He would point out that his proposal had not been accepted.

MR. BRODRICK said, that that showed that the Bill as it stood was not a Bill for the reinstatement of evicted tenants, but that it amounted to a tenants' indemnification Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had still to justify his position in extending the operation of the Bill beyond the cases of landless and destitute people residing in Land League huts or other places in the vicinity of their old holdings—these being the people who had excited sympathy. These were the people for whom the Mathew Commission had regard. They had said that these people were kept out of holdings which landlords were often endeavouring against their own interest to cultivate, or which were going back into a state of nature. The Opposition had moved an Amendment to the effect that tenants who had left the country should not be included in the Bill. That was met by an indignant protest from the Chief Secretary, and the Bill was now left in such a way that a man who had been in America for 12 years might come back and claim to be reinstated. By this Bill good, bad, and indifferent tenants were placed on the same level. One of the worst delusions with regard to the measure was that it would punish landlords who were equally guilty with regard to the eviction of tenants. What he objected to was that it placed landlords of all classes upon the same footing. If a landlord had acted unreasonably he should not be surprised if by the Bill he was compelled to receive back an evicted tenant whether he liked it or not, but the Government compelled equally to consent to such a course the landlord who had acted reasonably. The Government tried to force landlords like the Marquess of Lansdowne and the hon. Member for South Hunts, against whom before the Plan of Campaign nothing was alleged, into the dock beside Lord Clanricarde. The argument of the National League was that if Lord Clanricarde had given fair reductions such as were given by other landlords they would not have enforced the Plan of Campaign against him. But that contention did not apply to the case of the hon. Member for South Hunts in the least degree.

Mr. CONDON: That was a worse case.

Mr. BRODRICK said, there had never been a suggestion that there were cases of hardship on his estate, but, because of his conduct on behalf of other landlords, the National League thought it worth while to spend £70,000 in trying to reduce the hon. Member to submission, and they failed to do it. To say that what was sauce for Lord Clanricarde was sauce for other landlords in Ireland was a proposition he hardly thought the Chief Secretary would be prepared to uphold. With regard to the Arbitrators, he heard their names with the greatest astonishment. If anything could add to the dissatisfaction which was felt by those who wished to see this question settled on equitable grounds, it was that men had not been appointed who possessed the confidence of all Parties. He believed that by merely taking the Land Commission they would have taken men not only of high standing, but of judicial training, and who would have commanded respect. Mr. Piers White, he believed, was universally admitted to be an eminent Queen's Counsel. What his politics were he had not the least idea. [An Irish MEMBER: "He is a Unionist."] Mr. George Fottrell was a man of ability, but he certainly could not be described as a representative of the landlords. If they were not going to put the landlords' and tenants' position as a selection from the landlords and a selection from the tenants, on what possible ground did the Chief Secretary justify the appointment of Mr. Greer? Those who had read Mr. Greer's evidence before the Committee upstairs must be aware that there was not a single point on which Mr. Greer had a word to say on behalf of the landlords' side of the case. He should like to ask the Chief Secretary whether this gentleman was appointed before or after he delivered that evidence?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I cannot remember for the moment.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I rise to a point of Order. I wish to ask if the hon. Member is in Order in commenting on evidence given by witnesses before a Committee which has not yet reported to the House?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: As the evidence has not been published, or any Report yet presented to the House, any reference to what passed before that Committee would be out of Order.

Mr. BRODRICK said, that the Chief Secretary would have an opportunity of justifying the appointment after the Committee had reported. All he (Mr. Brodrick) would say was that a person who had delivered himself strongly on one side or the other would not be likely to give satisfaction on the Commission. The status of these Arbitrators was to be entirely irresponsible. They were not like Judges, with a legal reputation to keep up. They were not like Members of the House or Ministers, who could be challenged in the House. They were not permanent, and, therefore, according to hon. Members below the Gangway, they were liable to be interfered with. Under the circumstances, he thought that at least the Commissioners should have been men of impartiality and recognised status. When the evidence taken before the Committee was compared with speeches delivered in the House Members would understand the feeling of the Opposition with regard to these appointments. He should not for a moment say that the rejection of the Bill, if the House would agree to its rejection, was not a critical measure. The course of events of the present Session, and the utterances of responsible Members, showed that, in some respects, the turning point in the Irish Question had been reached. If they rejected the Bill they had been promised from some quarters that agitation would take place in Ireland during the ensuing winter ; but if they accepted the Bill, were they certain to be free from such agitation? The hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. J. E. Redmond) had declined to accept the Bill, and had treated it as an instalment and as incomplete. What was there to prevent the hon. Member, if the Bill were passed in its present shape, from going about Ireland throughout the winter exciting the minds of the tenants who were not to be reinstated because those who had taken their places refused to give way to them? He knew that it was said this Bill would be a timely concession to Irish grievances. He knew what followed on the rejection of the Compensation for Disturbance Bill in 1880. Possibly hon. Members opposite were thinking of some similar result if this Bill were rejected. He would, however, remind them that after the Land Act of 1881 and the Arrears Act of 1882—a measure not very dissimilar from the present Bill—agitation proceeded merrily enough in Ireland. It was impossible to isolate this particular Bill and the difficulty it was intended to meet from the general land question in Ireland. The Committee upstairs had made it abundantly clear that in the opinion of a certain number of Members fresh legislation might be required on the land question, and the complete standstill at which the Purchase Act had arrived must present to many Members a subject for most serious consideration. If this Bill were accepted by all Parties as a final settlement, two questions would still remain open for future agitation. It was an almost appalling prospect that after 15 years of struggle and the passing of five great Land Acts, after safeguards and concessions had been given which were unrivalled in any country in the world in regard to land legislation, and after exertions had been made in the House of Commons in reference to Irish land legislation which were unparalleled in the history of any Legislative Assembly, even if this Bill were passed there would be left open two great questions on which the Nationalist Members had time after time expressed their intention of asking for fresh concessions. It seemed as if, even after the acceptance of this Bill, the House would still be on the threshold of its labours. On what grounds did the Nationalist Members ask the landlords to give a complete amnesty to those against whom they considered they had a valid grievance? He did not believe there was any irreconcilable spirit on the part of the landlords in this matter if they could, with justice to those whom they were bound to protect—namely, the tenants who had shown the courage in times of great trouble to stand out againt inducements to dishonesty at no inconsiderable personal danger—if they could, with justice to these tenants, come to terms with the Nationalist Members, he trusted that no sense of injury and no feeling of personal bitterness, and no desire to snatch a petty triumph, would stand in the way. If, however, there was to be an amnesty it must be an amnesty on both sides. He, for one, would not be a party to an arrangement under which the landlords from a desire for peace were to accept as tenants men who had wronged them in the past, and men who would not be able to pay their rents in the future, unless the Nationalist Members would undertake that if any of those tenants who had occupied the evicted holdings declined to go out there should be an amnesty for them, that there should be no denunciations of them as land-grabbers, and no attempt to drive them from their holdings. Was there going to be an amnesty as regarded the Purchase Acts? Were hon. Members who wanted to give the tenants a right to come in and sell their interests to-morrow for as many years' purchase as they could get for them going to take off the embargo on purchase which he admitted had brought down the value of land from 17 years to 14 or 15 years' purchase? Hon. Members still had ringing in their ears the words of the hon. Member for Mayo (Mr. Dillon)—namely, that when the Nationalist Members came out of the struggle they would remember who were the people's friends and who were the people's enemies, and they would deal out their rewards to the one and their punishments to the other. If the hon. Member still adhered to these words, with what face could he ask the House for an amnesty for those who had fallen in the struggle? Not a whisper had been heard from the Nationalist Benches which would encourage the landlords to make any concession whatever, nor had there been heard any assurances which would justify those who desired peace and order in Ireland to believe that a timely concession to the Nationalist Members would induce them to turn their forces in the direction of peace. The Opposition were asked to pass this Bill with all its imperfections, not having been allowed to discuss it, not having had one concession made to their views, and with the knowledge that those who pressed it forward did not consider it to be a complete settlement of the question. If the Government would consent to make the Bill voluntary it was certain that the whole Nationalist Party would go to Ireland saying that they had received half a loaf for breakfast, and that there was no reason why they should not have their dinner and their supper. He should not despair of settling this question, and the whole of the matters connected with Ireland and Irish land, if the Chief Secretary would not confuse the purpose of securing peace with that of conciliating his Irish forces. If the Chief Secretary would take up the three subjects of evicted tenants, purchase, and the settlement of doubts and difficulties which had arisen with regard to the interpretation of the Land Acts—if he would do this in the spirit of compromise and conciliation, and attempt to bring both parties together without having any idea of getting a Party advantage, he (Mr. Brodrick) did not believe that reasonable men would be found to have very extreme differences on the subject. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) introduced the Arrears Bill he said that in the first place it was equitable, secondly it was safe, and lastly it would be effectual. Whether it was equitable he (Mr. Brodrick) did not know, but it certainly was not safe, and he doubted whether it had proved effectual. As to this Bill, he denied that it was equitable, he doubted whether it was safe, and he knew that every Irish Member in the House agreed in believing that it would prolong the difficulty. If the Government were going by this Bill to reverse the policy of successive Land Acts and to run counter to the pledges of successive Ministers, with the object of producing peace and order, they must do so apart from the idea of coercing a large minority in the House of Commons, and flinging down the gauntlet to a large majority in the other House. Peace could not be restored by jeering at the landlords as irreconcilable. It could only be brought about, if at all, by adopting a system of conciliation instead of compulsion and by appointing Arbitrators who were not political partisans. The question could not be settled by giving everything to one side and taking all from the other side. He trusted that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would give up these meanderings after a temporary majority, and would address himself to the Land question with determination and steadfastness to meet the question of how far peace could be secured in Ireland. He did not believe that if the right hon. Gentleman did this he would find himself met either by prejudice or by personal feeling on the Opposition side of the House. But assuredly if he clung to the provisions of this Bill and could not avoid re-kindling past discord and sowing the seeds of future disorder this measure, even if it were affirmed by Parliament, must result in the failure which was inherent in the principles embodied in it, and which the right hon. Gentleman himself had provoked by bringing the Bill forward without discussion, and pressing it through the House by measures which had never before been employed in regard to any measure submitted to the British Parliament.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months."—(*Mr. Brodrick.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork): The hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Brodrick) thought it necessary to set out by declaring that the policy of the Opposition in regard to this Bill was not dictated by the landlords of Ireland. Well, Sir, if that be so, it seems rather a pity that a member of the landlord class in Ireland should have been selected to move the rejection of the Bill on the Third Reading, and that another Member of that class should have been selected to move its rejection on Second Reading, and to announce what would be its fate in another place. The hon. Member for Guildford taunted us with having confounded in the same category of Irish landlords the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry), and Lord Clanricarde. Whose fault, Sir, is that? Why did the hon. Member deliberately ally himself, and combine with the exterminating landlords of Ireland? More than that, I am sorry to say that up to this hour there has been no repudiation of that connection. The hon. Member apparently adopted the association between the hon. Member for South Hunts and Lord Clanricarde. I ask the House to remember this fact: that not a single Irish landlord who has spoken in this Debate—so far, at all events—has said a single conciliatory word or a word of anything like a genuine and real concession. On the contrary; most of the speeches that have been made by Irish landlords in these Debates, I am sorry to say, have proved only too clearly that those gentlemen are just as vindictive and irreconcilable as ever. All the giving has been on one side. [*Opposition laughter.*] Certainly we have gone to the utmost possible lengths for peace, and we are willing to go to the utmost possible lengths for peace. We want no personal victory. The Member for Guildford has talked about amnesty. We have not concealed our desire for an amnesty as to the past on both sides. We cannot now speak as to the future. We are dealing with the past and the results of the past, and I venture to say that we are now, and we have always been, willing to go to any reasonable length or to make any reasonable sacrifice of personal or political feeling in order to create a genuine peace in Ireland, and a better feeling in Ireland, so that whatever changes may come hereafter in the law of Ireland, as of course they will come, they may be carried out in a peaceful and constitutional way, and that is all you have a right to demand from us. Even at this moment I venture to say that we would not stop at trifles if there was any genuine desire on the part of the Members of the Opposition to this Bill to make an adequate response to the memorable speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney) the other night, or if there was any genuine declaration that the landlords meant peace, and that they would work this Bill in any honest way. I venture to say that up to the present moment we have had nothing except declarations of hostility and insult from the landlords. I am afraid our moderation has been only too great. It has been misunderstood by the House, and the landlords of Ireland have mistaken our desire for conciliation and peace among our fellow-countrymen for a sign of weakness and fear. I believe that the Irish people and their Representatives, instead of erring in the direction of harshness towards the Irish landlords, have erred rather in the direction of softness and good nature. We have laboured for the past two years with might and main to create a better state of feeling in Ireland, and to have the difference that must exist conducted with better temper and in a strictly constitutional way. What is the position with regard to this Bill? Here it is proposed not to do Irish landlords any injustice, but to hand over to them a quarter of a million of money which they could never otherwise hope to obtain; we offer them peace in the country on the one condition of forgetting and forgiving, on both sides, as to the past. But, no. These gentlemen think that the desire for peace on the part of the Irish Party means that we are afraid of them. They think that their opportunity has come for offering 200 Irish victims on the altar of landlord vengeance. That is their calculation, and with that object they are now willing deliberately to plunge the country into a condition of turmoil and disturbance, and to arouse passions before which I venture to remind them that they have flinched before, and before which you will find them crying out in panic and dismay ere six months are over. It has been so in the past, and it will be so in the future. The landlords, I am sorry to say, think that this is their opportunity. They knew that there were certain differences among Irish Nationalists. They knew that the Irish people were and are determined to co-operate to the utmost extent with the Chief Secretary and even to bear injustice rather than interfere with the process of pacification that is being carried on in Ireland. How did they take advantage of that opportunity? Did they show a single spark of anything like generous or patriotic feeling in Ireland during the past two years? On the contrary; I venture to say they utilised and availed themselves of the circumstances in order to extort more rack rents, or arrears of rack rents, and to establish more land-grabbers in Ireland than they had any power of doing at any time for the last 15 years. And now when the country is tranquillised and when they think that the power of the popular organisation is more or less relaxed, these gentlemen have conceived the brilliant idea of striking a last blow at the popular organisation by exterminating the evicted tenants, their calculation apparently being that if they could succeed in nothing else they could succeed in throwing the country again into a state of disturbance, and in that way attempt to discredit the administration of the Chief Secretary. I venture to say that is a hateful work, worthy of the worst days of Irish landlordism, and in my humble opinion, at all events, it is very doubtful whether it is a wise policy, even from the point of view of the prettiest party wire-pullers. Irish Nationalists have their differences, no doubt, but so far as the mass of our people are concerned we are united as one man in detestation of land-grabbing and in the determination that these evicted tenants shall not be hounded down. It is just possible that the action of the landlords in this matter may have a certain influence in obliterating instead of increasing the differences among Irish Nationalists, because if men in another place carry out their treaty with the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh——

Colonel SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.): I beg the hon. Member's pardon. There is no treaty between me and the Members of another place. I know nothing whatever about the intentions of the House of Lords. I only stated my opinion.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN: I hope that the hon. and gallant Member's friends in another place will reconsider their determination. At any rate, his announcement in this House was an extremely positive one. But whether there is any treaty or not, if gentlemen in another place throw out this Bill they will have created a crisis and a national emergency in which every man who has Irish blood in his veins will think of nothing but how he may best pay them back. The Leader of the Opposition has found that before; he will find it again. Some politicians apparently calculate that it would be a good Party policy for the Unionists in England to create a condition of disturbance in Ireland by throwing out this Bill. I do not pretend to be an authority upon that subject. But I do not think the Unionist Party found the policy of coercion so very profitable a policy to them at the polls at the last General Election. If it were otherwise, I do not know why they are not still on the Treasury Bench. Do they think that they will increase their popularity in England if, owing to the effects of their policy in throwing out this Bill, they have to return to the policy of naked coercion in Ireland, and if they have again to call in the removables and the gaolers, and possibly the hangman, to coerce a country which the Chief Secretary, by a different course of treatment, has brought at the present moment to be the most peaceful country in Europe? I do not pretend to be an authority as to what may happen in England, although I think we have solid reason for hoping and believing that among the English people and among Members of this House, and, indeed, I go further, and say that among very considerable sections of the Opposition in this House there is a deep and growing feeling of abhorrence at the miserable, petty, hateful work of holding down Ireland for ever by coercion. But I venture to say that, whether it be good policy or whether it be bad policy, or whatever may be its effects upon the state of Parties in this House, the Irish people are not going to lie down tamely and to abandon the evicted tenants to destruction at the hands of their cruel enemies. We have very nearly reached the limits of endurance of human nature. I do not think gentlemen in this House fully appreciate yet the magnitude of this question. But I am sorry to believe that they will before many months are over, for as my hon. Friend the Member for Louth said in his eloquent speech the other night—

> "You are tugging at the very heart-strings of the Irish race, and you are raising passions which had far better be allowed to sink into oblivion."

This is a question that is, comparatively speaking, a small and manageable question if it is dealt with in the way in which this Bill proposes to deal with it. But it is a very great and vital question if it is deliberately neglected—contrary, as I believe, and as I think is pretty well known, to the judgment of the best minds among the Opposition in this House, and neglected at the dictation of the worst and most rowdy section of the Irish landlords, men who have neither the courage to make war nor to make peace in anything like a thorough-going spirit, men who may laugh and be boisterous here to-night, but who before 12 months are over will come whining to this House to save them from the consequences of their own folly in rejecting this Bill. Does anybody doubt that that will be the result? If there is anything that is certain of the struggle of the last 15 years in Ireland it is this—that at every step and stage in this struggle we have been forced forward by the folly of the landlords and of their friends in another place. There is another certainty, and that is that every successive stage of that struggle has left the landlord class stripped more and more, thank God! of their evil and accursed power on Ireland. I have said that this question, if it were approached in the right spirit, is easily manageable, and I do not shirk the difficulties. No man who knows Ireland doubts that by some means or other you must induce landgrabbers to give up the farms that they have taken. That is one of the rudimentary facts of the Irish position. But it is not at all so formidable a job as hon. Gentlemen imagine. It is my firm belief that, if this Bill were passed and were worked in a reasonable and an amicable spirit, in an enormous number of cases land-grabbing in Ireland would disappear. It is only on three estates that there are genuine planters to any extent, and I belief there the difficulty will settle itself. If the proper constitutional redress is refused to us in this Parliament, and if we are thrown back again on the resources of public opinion in Ireland, I venture to say that public opinion in Ireland will settle this matter for itself without any trace of violence or outrage. Hon. Gentlemen labour under an error if they imagine, as is often offensively assumed in this House, that public opinion in Ireland cannot assert itself and make itself felt except through crime and outrage. On the contrary, public opinion in Ireland can exert itself as powerfully free of those forces as public opinion in England could do; for instance, just as when the Primrose dames want to exercise public opinion on a Radical tradesman, or when it is wanted to drive an obnoxious Wesleyan minister out of Hatfield, it can be done without open violence or moonlighting. The Irish feeling as to land-grabbing is at least as legitimate as any exercised by the Primrose dames, and is exercised in the same manner. ["Hear, hear!" *and Opposition cheers.*] I repeat it, and I say that public opinion exercised in that manner you cannot put down, whether you call it boycotting or Hatfielding, or anything else. Lord Salisbury himself, in his famous speech at Newport, warned you that you could never put down the exercise of public opinion in that form. And to public opinion in that shape and form I venture to say that sooner or later the great majority of those persons who have taken evicted land in Ireland will be induced to surrender, with or without the inducements offered by this Bill. I doubt very much whether the landgrabbers will thank you for withdrawing that inducement. Certain hon. Members above the Gangway who assume to speak with authority on this question, have not hesitated to declare in so many words that they would go into armed rebellion rather than submit to certain legislation that might be passed by this House; yet, forsooth, these gentlemen pretend to be scandalized at the language we have used, and call it the language of menace. I might easily retort by a quotation from the speech of the hon. Member for the University of Dublin; but I and others had hoped that the necessity for strong language, of this or of any kind, on the part of Irish Members in this House had passed away for ever.

I speak the feelings of every man of the Party to which I belong when I say that we participate in the fullest possible degree in the spirit which actuated the right hon. Member for Bodmin in his speech the other night—a speech memorable in the history of this Debate. It is not a matter of rejoicing to us—it is a matter of the deepest pain and anxiety to think that the whole edifice favourable to peace which the Chief Secretary has been laboriously building up in Ireland should be endangered, and perhaps overturned, by circumstances too strong for him and for us. But it is not our fault. Hon. Members may tell us, and treat us as if we were the persons who created outbreaks and discontent in Ireland, and as if we aroused those passions for our own purposes. Then they know little of what they talk about. If they only knew all the risks we have run—all the misrepresentations we have endured in trying to restrain our people, and in preaching peace and patience to our people, while the landlords were seeking to take advantage of these efforts, they would think differently. But circumstances may make it impossible for us to restrain our people further. We have the deepest sense of the dangers that lie before us; we perceive the possible difficulties, and we shall not fail to confront them if they arise. We are bound by every human tie to remember those thousands of helpless men, women, and children who are waiting by the roadside in Ireland—who have waited for justice with a patience that is never equalled, trusting in the sense of justice of this House. Yet what do we find? That a measure brought forward by the Government of this country to settle this trouble, a measure generally admitted to be indispensable to the public peace, endorsed by the vast majority of the Representatives of the people of England, and recommended by at least one foremost statesman—and, indeed, if rumour be true—two of the foremost statesmen on the Opposition side—is in danger of being frustrated at the instigation of a rump of the Orange landlord Party in Ireland—of men who dared not face the Mathew Commission, and who dare not now face a Court of Arbitrators, against whose impartiality not a word has been uttered until the hon. Member for Guildford spoke to-night. I am sorry to have to say it, but the simple policy of these landlords, as blurted out by the hon. Member for South Hunts, is to make "examples" of the evicted tenants. This is to be their vengeance on thousands of women and children. On the very first night of the Debate on this Bill the leader of the Orange landlords in Ireland—whether he spoke authoritatively or not I do not know—warned this House that all our Debate would be in vain, that whatever the Representatives of the people decided their decision would be overridden in another place, and to judge from *The Times* and other Unionist authorities the House of Lords is about to carry out that pronouncement. If that be so, all I can say is that we accept the issue, merely remarking that in all such encounters it is not the landlord class which is ultimately found to be the most powerful. But whatever suffering may come to both sides from such a state of things I can only say that there is no point on which our consciences are uneasy—that we have done all that men could do for peace, and that the responsibility of whatever may ensue will not rest with us, nor with the Government, nor with the House of Commons, but with those lords and landlords who deliberately shut their eyes and ears to every appeal for peace, and those English politicians who deliberately, for their own vile and petty Party purposes, aid and abet them.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he did know that he had ever spent a worse hour in the House of Commons than the last hour of this Debate. There was an idea at the opening of the Sitting that even yet there might be a chance of securing compromise and peace; but both sides had put up speakers, and had, he thought, effectually prevented the slightest chance that there might have been of any arrangement being come to. The hon. Member for Guildford told the House that after 15 years of struggle and five Land Acts there ought to be something like peace. Yes, the House of Commons had done a great deal for Ireland in those 15 years. He himself recognised the fact, and he represented men who were grateful for it. But what about the 80 preceding years? What did those 80 years mean and teach? The seats in that House, which were now filled by hon. Members opposite, were occupied by Irish Liberal landlords. The seat which he held was occupied by a Conservative landlord, and for those 80 years Irish landlordism had its own way. The house of the Irish tenant was generally built by himself; nearly every improvement on the soil was effected by the Irish tenant; the roads were made out of the county cess which he paid; and yet all this, which was morally the property of the Irish tenant, was legally the property of the Irish landlord under the laws passed by an Assembly in which the Irish landlords were supreme. Eighty years of such work as that the hon. Member for Guildford thought was compensated for sufficiently by 15 years of well-doing on the part of the British Parliament. There ought to be an end to that kind of talk. Fifteen years of well-doing did not suffice to wipe out of remembrance a century of absolute wrong-doing. The hon. Member for Guildford said that the agitation carried on by hon. Members opposite below the Gangway had resulted in reducing the price of land from 22 to 16 years' purchase. The hon. Member forgot one important thing—namely, the depreciation in agricultural values. What use was it for an Irish landlord to make a statement like that in the face of the facts regarding British agriculture? He could tell the hon. Member—and the hon. Member knew it—for they had sat together upstairs for three months—that Irish landlords during the last 15 years had had their rents reduced by 20 per cent. But were the losses of British landlords measured by 20 per cent? No; they had lost, not 20, but 40 per cent., and there was no Land Act in England. The Land Acts had, in fact, been more of a protection to the Irish landlords than anything else. Nothing could be more hopeless than the speech of the hon. Member for Guildford. He was afraid that the Motion for the rejection of the Bill on the Second Reading by one Irish landlord and a similar Motion on the Third Reading by another, would be very apt to be misunderstood out of doors. Now, he came to the speech of the hon. Member for Cork. Whatever the speech of the hon. Member for Guildford might have been, he feared the speech of the hon. Member for Cork had extinguished the slightest glimmer of hope that might have existed. His was a speech breathing war from beginning to end. There was not one conciliatory sentence in it from start to finish. If hon. Members opposite had desired a compromise, they had chosen the most unfortunate representative of compromise and of peace to set forth their views. He had told them quite plainly what they were to expect in Ireland if this Bill were rejected or if a compromise were not arrived at. They were to have the old dreary story once again; they were to have boycotting, and all human liberty was to be trampled out if the British Parliament could not be persuaded to endorse the views of a section of the Irish Members. [A Nationalist Member: Your views also.] No; he was in favour of compromise, but he had never been able to support this Bill; he had voted against it already, and he was sorry to say he should have to vote against it again that night. Hon. Gentlemen opposite could not understand anyone desiring a compromise voting against a measure when he considered that it would be a bad and dangerous settlement. The Bill had been treated too much as if it were a Land Bill, but it was nothing of the kind. It was simply a Bill to undo the mischief which was done by the Plan of Campaign. From the outset the Plan of Campaign was a wicked and insane policy. The tenants whom the leaders of the Plan forced out of their holdings were in the enjoyment of legal rights conferred upon them by Parliament; they had an occupation right in the soil, and the right to sell that privilege, and yet they were forced out of their holdings in obedience to commands which were fatal both for them and for the country. Hon. Members who asked the British Parliament to put these men back into the position which they occupied before the leaders of the Plan of Campaign put them out of their holdings had no excuse for coming forward and demanding, as the hon. Member for Cork did, that they should be put back as a right. It could not possibly be granted as a right. He sympathised with the poor people who were out, and warmly desired a compromise by which they could be fairly and honestly restored, but he must tell the hon. Member for Cork, who demanded that these people whom he had duped and betrayed — [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"]—should be put back as a right, that that House was not likely to be influenced by a demand couched in language of that kind. It would have been infinitely wiser in the Nationalist Party if they had put up someone like the hon. Member for North Kerry, who understood the British House of Commons, to speak on behalf of the evicted tenants, instead of the man who had duped and betrayed them and put them out. [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"]

MR. W. O'BRIEN: I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. Member in Order in accusing me of betraying these tenants? What does the hon. Member mean?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I will tell the hon. Member what I mean. I had in my mind especially the tenants in Tipperary, and I believe I am correct when I say that since the day when those poor people went out at the hon. Member's bidding he has never set his foot in the town. That is what I mean by betraying those tenants.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Stick to your word now, or withdraw. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. Member is in Order?

*MR. SPEAKER: No unparliamentary expression reached my ears.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have no desire to come into collision with the hon. Member.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: Withdraw, withdraw!

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Mr. Speaker has just ruled that I have used no unparliamentary expression.

MR. W. O'BRIEN: If anybody accuses me of betraying anybody I will reply to him.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, what he was asserting was that this Bill was not a Land Bill in the ordinary sense of the word; it was simply a Bill to deal with the cases of a certain number of tenants who, unfortunately for themselves and the peace of the country, followed advice which they ought not to have followed, and surrendered interests which Parliament had conferred upon them. The Bill simply asked the British Parliament to undo the mischief that had been done, to put the people back, and to whitewash the Plan of Campaign. That was a plain issue, but not an issue to be forced upon the House at the point of the bayonet. What was the policy which he had a sincere desire to see carried out? The Plan of Campaign, as he had said, was a wicked and insane as well as an illegal policy; but when the Unionist Party consented to pass the 13th section of the Land Act of 1891 their position in respect of the Plan of Campaign changed greatly, for under that Act 84 of the worst Campaigners were restored to their holdings on the Ponsonby estate. They were typical Campaigners. They had resisted the Sheriff; they had joined in the conspiracy to defraud Mr. Ponsonby; they were steeped to the lips in illegality; and yet the Unionist Party consented that these men should be put back, and provided facilities for that purpose. From that moment they abandoned the ground that connection with the Plan of Campaign was sufficient to bar the way to the reinstatement of a tenant. The organs of the Irish landlords found fault with him because he stood by that policy now. It was, however, a good policy when the Smith-Barry syndicate put money into their pockets, and why should it be a bad policy now? The head and front of his offending was that he remained where he stood in 1891, and that he was prepared even to extend the policy then accepted, and to make it more wide in its sweep. He should be told that a voluntary measure such as the 13th section of the Land Act of 1891 would fail as that provision failed. Well, he admitted the failure, but he would point out that there were influences at work in 1891 which were not at work now. The hon. Member for East Mayo, he was sure, would admit that he did not look with much favour upon the 13th section of the Act of 1891.

MR. J. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said, he was glad to have an opportunity of explaining that matter. The hon. Member had the advantage in speaking of him more frequently than he (Mr. Dillon) spoke of him. The hon. Member had frequently charged him with having obstructed the operation of Clause 13 of the Act of 1891. He could assure the hon. Member that there was no truth, so far as he could remember, in that charge. As a matter of fact, it was undeniable that in the case of two Campaign estates in Ireland he largely assisted in the negotiations for a settlement, and, in one instance, a considerable amount of money was advanced from the national funds.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL said, he did not think that the hon. Member for East Mayo would deny that he had made speeches which were construed in Ireland as not being very much in favour of the 13th clause of the Act of 1891, in the course of which he had advised the people of Ireland not to be in a hurry to purchase under the provisions of the clause. But at that time there were influences at work that had now ceased to exist. The Plan of Campaign was alive at that time, but it was now dead, and he hoped that it would have no resurrection. The tenants were tired of it, the landlords were tired of it, and, in fact, everybody was tired of it. If this Bill could be transformed into a voluntary measure, he believed that 80 per cent. of the cases would be settled amicably between the landlords and the tenants without any compulsion at all. The other night the hon. and learned Member for Louth had taunted him across the floor of the House with the cry of "Clanricarde." All he could say was that if Lord Clanricarde stood out against a voluntary settlement under this Bill in the face of his brother landlords, Parliament would take care that one unreasonable man should not be allowed to disturb the peace of the country. He was afraid that the time had come when it was hopeless to attempt a compromise after what had been said. [*Cries of* "No!"] But now, even at this eleventh hour, he would entreat the Leaders on both sides of the House, and also the Irish Leaders, to try and do something towards enabling this sore to be healed, and so conduce to the preservation of that peace which they were all so glad to see was now prevalent in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said, he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was still quite sure that in this Bill he had hit upon the right plan for dealing with this difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman had heard speeches made from various quarters of the House. He wondered whether he would welcome as an ally the hon. Member for Cork. Could hon. Members be surprised that, when the Irish landlords were accused of being unjust and cruel to their tenants, those who valued their honour and their character for honesty should determine to fight this matter to the very last. He regretted the fatal failure of the Government to deal with this problem. He should vote against the Third Reading of this Bill with reluctance, but without the slightest hesitation. In his opinion, the measure as it now stood would increase instead of diminish the evil with which it was intended to cope. The difficulty with regard to this question was that in Ireland it was impossible to offer this amnesty—this relief to the wounded soldiers of the land war—without tending to the renewal of such wars in the future. The Government had offered the House no middle course at all; they were told that they must either accept this Bill or have no Bill at all. Therefore, those who, like himself, were in favour of some extension of the 13th clause of the Act of 1891 were powerless to amend the Bill. The Government were open to the reproach that they had moved the Closure just at the moment when the alternative policies of compulsory reinstatement and voluntary purchase were about to come on for discussion. Why had not the Government allowed them to proceed for four hours longer with the Debate, in order that they might have decided that question? They would not then, at any rate, have wrecked the success of their own measure. The Opposition were entitled to vote against this measure because, in their judgment, it would prove a source of danger in the future, and only dealt with a portion, and not the whole, of the evil it was intended to remedy. The evicted tenants were not all fraudulent or bankrupt. If that were so, the Government would not dream of bringing in exceptional legislation, unless they were prepared to bring it in for the bankrupts of the whole of the United Kingdom. Some of them were the victims of the Plan of Campaign, and no one would refuse to grant them an amnesty. But whoever heard of an amnesty being granted until the conclusion of peace, and would it not be madness to grant it in the face of the declarations which had been made by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway? Moreover, the evil with which the Bill proposed to deal was a diminishing one. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in the course of the discussion on the Second Reading of the Bill, had pointed to the fact that the number of evicted tenants was now only 4,000. It might be contended upon all the grounds he had enumerated that the House would be justified in voting that no attempt at all should be made to deal with this question, because the danger of carrying out such legislation was so great and the advantage that would result from it would be so small, and that Ireland must trust to the ordinary and natural curative process which was found to be so effectual in other civilised countries. He, however, had not advocated such a policy of inactivity, and he had always spoken in favour of an attempt being made to deal with the difficulty. The number of tenants to be reinstated and the amount of money that that reinstatement would involve were, in his opinion, very small matters for consideration in comparison with the effect that the settlement of this question would have upon the public opinion of Ireland. In his view the state of things in Ireland would never be brought into a satisfactory condition unless a compromise was arrived at. That was his attitude; it was not one of *non possumus* by any means, and it never had been. They had to take the greatest care in the choice of the remedy they proposed for the evil they had to deal with. The Government, however, in the preparation of this Bill had taken no care whatever. They had roughly, without a moment's consideration, based their Bill upon the recommendations of the Mathew Commission. The Chief Secretary, however, had himself been foremost in deploring the fact that the Commission had taken evidence on one side only. How much better the Commission would have been able to judge of the policy of reinstatement if they had heard evidence on behalf of the landlords as well as on behalf of the tenants. So far from deciding between reinstatement and purchase, the Mathew Commission seemed to have drawn no distinction in their minds between the two policies. The Commission had put forward the idea that the policy of reinstatement had been sanctioned by Parliament when they passed the 13th clause of the Act of 1891. That sanction, however, did not contain one word about reinstatement, but advocated merely voluntary purchase. The Government borrowed this policy wholesale from the recommendations of the Mathew Commission, and then put forward this Bill on the plea of expediency. Was it possible that the policy of reinstatement could be put forward on the plea of expediency? Was it not obvious they must prove that injustice must have been done by the landlord, and was it not true that the Government themselves had set up a tribunal to decide whether the landlords had been just or unjust? That was not a policy of expediency but of retribution. With one voice the Government said they wished to heal a social sore, and yet at the same time they were advocating a policy which would lead to law-suits all over Ireland, and wherever a tenant was reinstated it would be looked upon as a punishment on the landlord for gross and callous cruelty in the management of his estate. They would make it a matter of personal honour for every single landlord to take advantage of provisions of the Bill and show cause why a tenant should not be reinstated. This policy of reinstatement was advocated, as a wholesale remedy, for the first time in the Report to which he had alluded. Even hon. Gentlemen from Ireland had not previously recommended it, except as a punishment to be inflicted upon recalcitrant landlords who would not sell. But now, like the rain of heaven, it was to fall alike upon the just and upon the unjust. If the Chief Secretary told him that it was not so because his tribunal would decide, and in the case of the just landlord would not compel him to receive the tenant back, did not the right hon. Gentleman see in what dilemma he was landed? If the tribunal intervened to save the landlord from reinstatement because he was just, then it was evident the policy of the Government would only affect a comparatively small area in Ireland. This policy of wholesale reinstatement would either affect the just landlords or it would not. If the tribunal stepped in to save the just landlord, the Bill would not meet the difficulties, because in this very Report of the Mathew Commission, if hon. Members would turn to the 40th paragraph, they would see it stated—

"On the evidence brought before us we find that many landlords have given large and even generous abatements."

The Commissioners were speaking of the landlords upon these 17 Plan of Campaign estates; therefore it followed that upon the very estates the Government wished to deal with there had been many cases in which the landlords had acted not only justly but generously. These landlords might fight; in fact, the Bill would force them to fight before this tribunal, and was it not certain that their tenants would not be reinstated? Suppose the Government attempted to enforce it, was not their policy ubiquitous, and if they failed to enforce it was it not abortive? He would venture, even now, to ask the Government to consider the alternative which they practically refused to argue in Committee, because, whether they inflicted injustice or failed to meet the case, their policy would not bring a message of peace; it would be an incitement to a renewal of hostilities. If they forced the landlord who had acted not only justly but generously to receive back a tenant to lose all the expenses he had legally incurred, what peace and harmony would they have? If, on the other hand, the case was so monstrous that no tribunal would force the landlord to reinstate the tenant, would not a continual agitation be kept up until further and more drastic legislation obtained the sanction of this House? This policy of reinstatement, he thought, stood condemned on this ground. He would ask the Government to consider whether the policy of purchase had not something to be said in its favour? By the policy of purchase he meant voluntary purchase, because compulsory purchase laboured under the main disabilities that he had indicated in the policy of reinstatement. Compulsory purchase would give, for one thing, a special advantage to these particular tenants which had long been denied to the bulk of the Irish tenants. On that ground alone he rejected compulsory purchase. But taking voluntary purchase, he knew of no argument which had been brought against it except the mere cuckoo cry that the 13th section of the Land Act had failed. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had dealt with one ground for that failure, and the two other grounds were that that section contained no adequate provision for dealing with the question of arrears and costs, and it left the two parties to approach each other. If they so extended the policy of the 13th section as to institute a tribunal which, where it considered the sale of a whole estate was for the benefit of the locality, should fix the price and assess the amount it was prepared to give for arrears and costs and compensation for disturbance, and then left the three parties to take or leave their decision, he believed that would be operative in more cases than would be touched by the Bill, and that the three parties would only too gladly welcome their deliverance from the bitter legacy of ancient feuds.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: During the speech I delivered a short time ago I used a term which I wish to recall. The expression I used was, "betrayed the tenants." I wish to recall the word "betrayed." I used it hastily.

MR. W. O'BRIEN was understood to accept the explanation.

MR. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.) said, that there was no question that in some senses this, as had been said, was a small Bill. It dealt with a comparatively small sum of money, with a small number of men, and he thought he should be able to show that it was one of the most moderate Bills ever proposed, and, moreover, was one which, in his view, would confer benefits upon every class that it touched. It would benefit not merely the evicted, but the evictors, and even also the land-grabbers. Though it was a small Bill it was one of vital importance to the Irish people. It went straight home to their hearts; it touched a question that had been ever present to them during the last two years, and from the settlement of which by that House they had been waiting with a painful patience. He thought that every Member of the House, if he would but speak from his heart, was honestly anxious that the poor evicted tenants should get back to their holdings. These men had waited for relief with a patience which was beyond all praise; and he believed that no one really wished that relief should be denied to them. Viewed from the side of humanity, this was a large question, as 4,000 tenants with their innocent wives and families were involved in the issue. The poor people had waited not only patiently, but crimelessly, trusting to Parliament to give them redress. What was the Bill? It was a moderate and equitable Bill, and, as he had said, it benefited every class that it touched. It was doubly blessed; it blessed him who gave and him who took. It was said by the hon. Member who moved its rejection that it was a Bill to pay criminal conspirators out of the plunder of a Church. He did not wish to be offensive to the landlord class, therefore he should not adopt the hon. Member's words. But who were the people who were to be paid by this Bill? The very class that the hon. Member for Guildford represented. Of this £250,000 almost the entire sum would pass into the pockets of the Irish landlords. If the hon. Member called them criminal conspirators that was no reason why he should follow the example. What was the grievance under which the Irish landlords laboured? They had at present on their hands derelict and evicted farms for which they were unable to find tenants. These farms were absolutely worthless to them and to the community. They had no hope of ever getting one penny of arrears of rent which were due by the evicted tenants, and what was the injustice which this Bill imposed upon them? What was the grievance of which they complained, for they always heard of this measure as one for the punishment of the Irish landlords? They would get back a tenant where before they had no hope of a tenant, and two full years' rent in addition, and, if they did not like that, they had purchase instead. Where was the grievance in asking the landlords to come under such a system of compulsory purchase? The Marquess of Londonderry had stated it as his opinion that the system of compulsory purchase should be extended to all the landlords in Ireland. This terrible Bill did no more than to apply to a limited section the powers which the Marquess of Londonderry was desirous should be applied to every landlord in Ireland. It did more. It gave to these landlords a power and privilege never before given to any other landlords in Ireland—namely, that of immediately receiving and retaining the one-fifth which every other landlord was obliged to leave in the hands of the Land Commission as security. Where was the evil to the landlord in all this? If the Bill were not adopted the farms would remain vacant, no rent would be received by the landlords, and he could find no other motives except malice and vindictiveness that induced the landlord to prefer the condition in which he was now, with his lands running waste and no prospect of their being tenanted, to the condition of getting a large purchase money or a solvent tenant, as he would get in the alternative given under the Bill. There were another class they were told must be considered—namely, the land-grabbers. He did not profess any special sympathy with them, but they were represented by their friends as models of all the virtues. The land-grabber, they were told, was a person to be hedged round with all kinds of care and tender precautions, and treated as tenderly as a geranium or an orchid. When they said that the land-grabber had acted within his legal rights they had said all that could be said in his favour. What were his special privileges and virtues? He would tell them. When the tenant and the landlord were at war—and everybody now admitted that the tenant had good reason for the action he took—the land-grabber stepped in from a mere sordid motive of personal aggrandisement and seized the property of his neighbour. He could understand, and, to a certain extent, sympathise with a landlord who said he would stand by his class whether they were right or wrong; but what were the special considerations which should be extended to the man who from the most sordid motives of personal gain had deserted his own class? He thought if the land-grabber were fairly compensated, if he was not injured—as he believed he would not be—and if he was benefited, as he would be under this Bill, any more could not be asked in his behalf. The hon. Member for Tyrone would bear him out when he said that a very large number of these land-grabbers were only too anxious to get out of the position in which they were, apart from any violence or suggestion of violence on the part of their neighbours. The hon. Member for South Tyrone had told them that he planted the grabbers himself on the Brooke Estate as an act of war. He believed these particular grabbers were at the present time very nearly starved out, and they would be delighted if they could get the terms this Bill gave them of an honourable truce and treaty, and if they could go out with the honours of war—and perhaps some of the booty of war along with it—in their pockets. The land-grabbers would benefit by the Bill, and it was right to make it apply to all land-grabbers and to make it compulsory in their regard. The Bill gave the land-grabber the option of saying whether he would stay in or go out. It did not affect the public opinion of the district—no Bill could do that—but it gave him the legal option to stay in or go out. The vast majority of the land-grabbers were anxious to go out on receiving the compensation this Bill afforded them, and its rejection would deprive them of the opportunity they were so anxious to embrace. It was said that a voluntary Bill would settle this question, but he and the Party to which he belonged held a different opinion. But, after all, what did the difference between the two Parties amount to? Compulsion under this Bill only applied to cases in which compulsion was necessary. Suppose that the one man who refused to come before the tribunal set up by the Bill were the most noble the Marquess of Clanricarde. Was there a man in the House who would say that he was not a man to whom compulsion would fairly apply? The hon. Member for Tyrone had promised to back a Bill for that nobleman's expropriation, and he (Mr. Bodkin) and his hon. Friends merely asked that in a case in which the landlord had ruthlessly and cruelly exercised a power which an unjust law had given him the House of Commons should step in and adjust the balance. Surely that was a case in which compulsion might be fairly applied. Over 1,000 human souls—men, women, and children—dependent upon the will of Lord Clanricarde, had been evicted. He had made desolate a whole stretch of country, and the Irish Representatives might fairly ask the House to redress the wrong he had done. Not content with driving these men out of their holdings, he had deprived them of the shelter they had obtained, and the unfortunate tenants who had afforded them that shelter had in turn suffered—that being their only crime. Was that the man the House would protect from compulsion? On the Marquess of Clanricarde's estate alone there were over 200 families to whom gross injustice had been done, and each case demanded redress. Was such a man as that the kind of person over whom the House would extend its ægis? It had been urged that it was impossible for that House to do justice to the tenants unless they did some injustice to the landlords. Even if that were so, was it not a case in which they ought not to hesitate and—

> "To do a great right, do a little wrong,
> And curb this cruel devil of his will."

They were told that the House of Commons was merely a Debating Assembly for this purpose, and that whatever they might do was subject to the will of another place; that all their words and actions were to be revised and controlled by the Lords in the neighbouring building, who, whatever this House might choose to do, would throw out the Bill. At any rate, he hoped that they would not identify themselves in any way with those Members of the other House who would do all in their power to throw out the Bill. The people of Ireland had waited for two long years in the hope of conciliation, and during that long time the country had been absolutely quiet, law-abiding and peaceful; and they were proud indeed to be told that that result was due to the efforts of his Party. They had been told by the Unionist Members of the House that their proper course to pursue was to wait, and that as soon as they convinced the majority of the House of Commons of the reality of their grievances, those grievances would be redressed in a proper and constitutional way. Well, they had convinced the majority of the House of Commons, and the Imperial Government of the country had endorsed that opinion by bringing forward the present Bill. If the House of Lords threw out the Bill—as they were told it would—what answer were they to give to the Irish people after waiting patiently for two long years? Having patiently trusted the Imperial Parliament—"asking for bread, they would be given a stone," and told that there was no justice or redress for them from the House of Commons, because the veto was in the House of Lords, by whom the decision was to be given. If the Peers were to accept or reject Bills that were sent up to them just as they thought fit, then in reality Ireland would be governed, not by the Imperial Parliament at all, but by the House of Lords. Irish Members had been accused of starting an agitation throughout Ireland in order to benefit themselves. He scorned to answer so baseless an imputation. They had been accused of violence and of showing no conciliation. Were they expected to sit down tamely under such circumstances? Were they to say to the 4,000 people who looked to them for redress—"You may starve; you are to serve as examples and scarecrows; you are to have no help; the House of Commons will not assist you"? Their answer was that they had come to the House with one object alone, neglecting their own means of livelihood, and disregarding the home ties so dear to Irish hearts. They had done what they considered was their bounden duty towards their country, and in doing so had not counted the personal cost. If the Lords rejected the Bill the Irish Representatives would be again sent back to Ireland empty-handed, and in that case he could assure the House that the people of Ireland would not wait on quietly for another indefinite period, suffering in the meantime injustice and misery. Who could blame them? After the way their appeal for justice had been heard, would they not take the remedy into their own hands? He believed that the Irish people had a weapon still that would bring their cause to a triumphant issue, and the weapon that would win them the battle was strong, steady, and united agitation. That had been heretofore, and they were now told was still the only weapon by which even an instalment of justice could be wrung from the Imperial Parliament.

Mr. CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston) said, the hon. Members opposite must learn that a threatening attitude had no effect upon the British people, who in this, as in other matters, would go on their way dealing out justice between man and man, irrespective of any threats of violence which might be addressed to them. He confessed that he was much struck by some of the remarks of the hon. Member for Cork, who had said that it was necessary for the tenants of Ireland to get redress by one means or another, and that the pressure brought to bear upon the landlords and others in Ireland under the Plan of Campaign was very similar in its character to that brought to bear by political organisations and agitations in this country upon social questions. Those who had, like himself, visited Tipperary when it was under the directorship of the hon. Member for Cork and the hon. Member for East Mayo, knew that no parallel at all could be drawn with any political organisation in any part of England, Scotland, or elsewhere throughout the Empire. No British party had ever set spies outside boycotted shops to follow people who purchased goods there and assault them and destroy the goods. No British party had ever compelled tenants to leave their own houses and shops and go into quarters built for them by a political league making themselves caretakers for the priests. It was useless for hon. Members opposite to appeal to British Radicals as if they had anything in common, and ask them to support a policy of degradation and tyranny. No one could be surprised that the Government had done their utmost to confine the discussion on the Bill within the narrowest limits, for it related to a subject upon which they were not likely to gain the sympathy of any hon. Members who represented English constituencies. When the real facts of the case became thoroughly exposed they could not hope to carry with them the sympathy of British electorates. Every Amendment moved and every Division taken would have the effect, therefore, of damaging this measure, by exposing its character more fully to the public at large. No Scotchman or Englishman if left to himself would have devised a proposal by which a landlord who had bought a property 10 years ago should be obliged now to take back a tenant who had been evicted five years before he became the owner. This measure could not be defended upon the ground that these tenants had been evicted under harder land laws than prevailed in other civilised countries. [Mr. Bodkin: Oh, oh!] Would the hon. Member name one civilised country where the land laws were more favourable to the tenants and the tenants were more secure against the landlords than Ireland? [MR. BODKIN: England.] Well, he ventured to say if a proposal were made to assimilate the land laws of Ireland to those of England the Irish tenants would have something to say to it, and the hon. Member for South Tyrone would be likely to oppose it very strongly in the interests of the tenants in his constituency. It was said that some landlords in Ireland had carried out their powers very harshly, and perhaps some of them might be said to have had a double dose of original sin. But even if it could be proved that some of the Irish landlords had carried out their powers in a very hard way, that would be no justification for punishing not only the landlord who had evicted, but the landlord who succeeded him in his title, as was done by this Bill. There was one element of this proposal which showed a good deal of insincerity in the attacks made by the present Government against the proposals of the late Unionist Administration. The danger of the land proposals of the late Government, it was contended, lay in British credit being used to enable Irish tenants to acquire their holdings, but the danger of the present measure arose from the fact that it was not for the benefit of the best kind of tenants. When the land purchase proposals of the late Government were before the House hon. Members said that serious risk was to be thrown on British taxpayers, because British credit was to be used for carrying out land purchase in Ireland. But now British credit was going to be used for carrying out purchases, not by the best, most deserving, and most solvent tenants in Ireland, who were the most likely to meet their obligations, but on behalf of those who either would not or could not pay the rents which had been fixed for them by the Land Courts established for their protection. A proposal of this sort could not seriously be relied on to promote the interests of the peace of Ireland. They could not promote the interests of peace by enabling those who had openly defied the law to see they had been able to defeat the law; they could not secure against criminal conspiracy in the future by a surrender to the criminal conspirators of the past; and this Government could only secure peace in Ireland, as in all other parts of the world where British authority was exercised, by showing that they would never surrender to threats, never do injustice, but calmly go on their way, holding the balance evenly between man and man and doing justice to all.

MR. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said, the indignant language in reference to threats which had just been addressed to the House followed exactly the language used on a previous occasion. When the hon. Member stated that Parliament would never surrender to threats, he wondered what the hon. Member thought of the threats which were held out by the Representatives of Irish landlords on the Second Reading of the Bill. The main objection to the measure was that it introduced the principle of compulsion; but, practically speaking, there was very little compulsion in the Bill. Certainly, no compulsion was placed on the new tenant, who was master of the situation. If he objected to the proceedings they were at an end. Where a farm was in the hands of the landlord, or was lying derelict, the landlord was offered the option either of taking the evicted tenant back, or of selling to him. Where was the compulsion there if the evicted tenants were to be reinstated, or compensated, where objected to? According to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, the proposal of the Government had been brought forward for the purpose of dealing with the Plan of Campaign tenants. That was the whole tenour of the hon. Member's speech. But he would remind the House that those tenants were but a small proportion of the tenants who would come under the Bill. The Plan of Campaign was not started until Parliament had refused to do justice to the Irish tenants. On the question of compulsion he should like to have known what the right hon. Member for Bristol would have said if he had been present. He would ask hon. Members whether they had never heard of the pressure within the law which that right hon. Gentleman (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) thought it necessary to apply to certain Irish landlords? Was not that compulsion? If there was anything to regret in the administration of the present Chief Secretary it was that he had not dealt with the same determination as the right hon. Member for West Bristol had dealt with the landlords in Ireland. He must venture frankly to tell the Chief Secretary, for whom he had a great personal respect, that a great deal of the difficulty of the situation had been created by the manner in which he had given way to the landlord party in Ireland. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol would tell them that when he was Chief Secretary he never refused police for eviction duty, but he was most careful when an unreasonable landlord applied to him for protection, when he wanted to commence a campaign in Ireland, to tell the representative of the landlord that he was busy, and to call again. If the present Chief Secretary would tell the landlords who persisted in burning down the houses of their unfortunate tenantry in this ruthless work of eviction, when they applied for police protection for eviction duty, to call again, he would find them in a much better frame of mind to accept a moderate proposal. It had been said by many of the speakers in the House that many of the men who were going to be reinstated—in fact, they spoke as if the whole body were going to be reinstated—were the bad characters on the estate. On that point he would also like to have the opinion of a right hon. Member of the House who had experience—the Member for Bristol. When application was made to the right hon. Gentleman, before the Act of 1887, in reference to the very crisis they were dealing with in the speeches that night the right hon. Gentleman made inquiry into the circumstances of these evictions, and asked questions as to the rent, the valuation, the capability of the tenant to pay the rent, and he should like to have the valuable testimony of the right hon. Gentleman as to whether the people whom he endeavoured to keep in their farms were all bad characters. The hon. Member who had just addressed the House spoke of the difficulty created for the new tenant in Ireland by placing him in the position of having to refuse to sanction proceedings under this Act. That was no new difficulty created by this Bill, for the new tenant even now was constantly in the position of refusing to allow the reinstatement of the evicted tenant. What he complained of in regard to the Bill was that if the Chief Secretary, instead of this partial compulsion as applied to the landlord, applied the principle of compulsion in dealing with all cases, then hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway would have been glad to accept this small bit of compulsion. The Irish Members were not in favour of compulsion upon Irish landlords or anybody else if there was any other way of settling the question. They were interested in the peace of the country, and if they had an honest conviction in their minds that there was any means of settling this question by the voluntary principle they should be the first to adopt it. He noticed that hon. Members who stood up and declaimed against compulsion, and who pointed to it as the great blot on the Bill, incidentally came round to some man who was a leader in the Plan of Campaign, or a leader in politics in his district, and asked, "Will you throw this man back upon the landlord?" Was it reasonable to assume that in the case of men who had been in the thick of the fight that the landlords were likely voluntarily to reinstate them? They were not dealing with the better class of landlords; not with those who had shown forbearance and humanity, but with the men who rack-rented, who refused concessions, who refused to give to the tenants in 1886 the concessions wrung from them by the Land Act of 1887, and there was nothing in the history of these men, nothing in their relations with their tenants, which would justify them for one moment in expecting that this question could be settled if anything were left to the discretion and the voluntary action of these men.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.) said, he did not pretend that his personal opinion on this matter was of any importance. But he represented to a certain extent a very large body of opinion which he felt was much more valuable than his own. He did not represent the landlord class, or any class directly interested in this question; and yet he had come to the conclusion that he must follow the example of the Member for South Tyrone, and vote against the Third Reading of the Bill. He had long thought there was a possible *via media;* he had said so from the beginning; but he supposed now it was absolutely too late. What the Unionist Party had to complain of was that the Chief Secretary had treated the opponents of the Bill throughout as if they were enemies of the public peace. He thought the Bill might have had a real success if it had been made voluntary, but unfortunately no proposal in that direction would be received by the other side. It was said that the Opposition had given no reasons for their policy. But the Opposition had been given no opportunity of stating their arguments, and therefore it was unfair to say that they were to blame for not advancing arguments in support of their policy. It seemed to be supposed that this Bill was entirely an Irish Bill—that it dealt merely with Irish landlords and Irish tenants. The Bill, however, appealed to a totally different set of considerations. There were considerations in connection with this Bill which affected not only Irish landlords and tenants, but other classes of the community, and those considerations would have to be faced. He could assure the Chief Secretary that there was a genuine and legitimate opposition to this Bill from large classes of the community who were entitled to be heard. There were many who felt that there were duties incumbent upon a great State like this, and that those duties could never be disregarded. There were many who felt that there were propositions in the Bill at variance with what was right and honest in private and public life. The proposals in the Bill to legalise wrong and to make a new form of fraud a meritorious action would not be tolerated for a moment in private life; and to reward persons who had no claim except their successful resistance to the law was an insane thing in the interest of the State. There were many outside that House who regarded the Bill as contrary to the traditions of their national life, and who felt that if they gave their sanction to the Bill they would be doing violence to the best and most noble sentiments of their national life. He was moved by the speech of the hon. Member for Louth, but he must remind him that they had their feelings and their sense of honour as well as the hon. Member and his friends, and that they had duties to perform to those they represented. He felt it absolutely as a matter of duty on behalf of thousands of men and women in Ireland, and he was bound under no considerations whatever to recognise the violence to the great principles of honesty and fair dealing between man and man which he believed was inflicted by this Bill. Those were his sincere feelings; but, at the same time, he would like to know whether it was yet too late to give effect to a sentiment, which was far more general than some people imagined, in favour of compromise. His own earnest desire, even at this moment, was to see some settlement arrived at and an avenue of escape found from this administrative difficulty, which undoubtedly did exist in Ireland. He recognised the difficulty that existed in Ireland, and he should be honestly and truly glad if some solution could be arrived at which his sense of duty would allow him to support. If, even at the eleventh hour, the Bill could be so framed that unhappy evicted tenants could receive by the grace of Parliament that which they could not obtain as a right, he should be glad to accept it. But he could not on this question separate himself from the Party to which he belonged. It was absolutely impossible for the Members of that Party to conceal their hatred and detestation of many things that had been done in Ireland; and they could never give their consent to a compulsory Bill of this kind, because they were convinced it would do grave wrong to many honest and honourable men.

MR. ROSS (Londonderry) said, it had so often been urged in the course of the Debate that the opposition to the Bill came altogether from the landlord faction, and from a "junta of Irish landlords"—as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin said—that he thought it well as the Representative of a borough to express his view, and the view of his constituents, with regard to the Bill. None of his constituents were directly affected by anything contained in the Bill, for he did not suppose there was a single landlord who had evicted a tenant or a single evicted tenant who would come under the Bill residing in his constituency; but they regarded the Bill as a serious matter for the peace of Ireland, and one that required their most careful consideration. He should be glad to agree with the principle of forget and forgive; to wipe out the past, and to let bygones be bygones; but in his view the permanent mischief that would be caused by the Bill would be 50 times greater than any temporary good that could be effected by it. But if he could have brought himself to support the Bill at all, the speech of the hon. Member for Cork to-night would have convinced him that it was his duty to vote against the Bill. For what did the House hear from the hon. Gentleman? Instead of the men at whose door the whole blame for this unfortunate state of affairs in Ireland was to be laid, acknowledging that perhaps they had acted in ignorance of the law, or in a spirit of great rashness, they had the founder of the Plan of Campaign defending, before the House, that movement, and threatening and insulting the landlords. That was the reply to the noble and touching speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin; that was the way that noble speech was received by the Nationalist Members. He would give the House some idea of the operations of the Plan of Campaign. It appeared that in the year 1890 the tenants on the Glensherrold Estate owed five years' arrears of rent, amounting to £2,600; and the landlord offered to wipe out all those arrears if the tenants would pay one year's rent, less 30 per cent., of £384. The Catholic Bishop of Limerick, Dr. O'Dwyer, a most eminent ecclesiastic, wrote to the parish priest at Glensherrold, strongly urging the people to accept the very favourable terms offered by the landlord. What happened? On the 11th of July, 1890, the hon. Member for Cork, the hon. Member for East Mayo, and the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin, went down to Limerick, and publicly denounced the Bishop for advising the tenants of the Glensherrold property to accept this offer of paying £384, and having £220 of arrears wiped off. The result was that the tenants refused the landlord's offer, and went in for the Plan of Campaign. And yet, in face of an event of that kind, those who opposed the Bill were charged with doing a very cruel thing to the evicted tenants. He believed there could be no Bill framed more calculated to demoralise the tenantry of Ireland. On the day that the Bill was passed, every honest tenant, who held his farm and complied with the law in the face of threats and sometimes of outrages perpetrated on him, would feel that he was a fool; while every rogue who had gone in for lawlessness would think himself a very clever fellow indeed. If those were the object-lessons the House intended to hold out to the very impressionable people of Ireland, it was a very black look-out for peace and order in Ireland. He believed that this Bill was an absolutely unprecedented Bill. Attempts had been made to trace some of its principles to the Land Act of 1881 and to the 13th section of the Land Act of 1887. That meant that when the Unionist Party in a case of emergency advanced to the extremest limit they could go and made a concession in the Act of 1887, that concession, instead of being accepted as a compromise, was made a platform from which totally new and serious demands were made. He disputed altogether the dangerous method of reasoning in which the hon. Member for South Tyrone had indulged, that the fact that the Unionist Party had passed the 13th section of the Act of 1887 under which 80 of the Ponsonby tenants had got back to their holdings was an argument in favour of the Bill. What was the principle of the Bill? The gentlemen called Arbitrators were to proceed, without any appeal, to reverse the decisions of the Superior Court of Ireland for the last 15 years. He and his colleagues from the North of Ireland represented a number of planters, or the descendants of planters, of a couple of centuries ago; and he had no doubt that tenants had been evicted to make room for them; and perhaps if the Bill were passed, it would be proposed to extend its principle to the English and Scotch settlers of Ulster. He was for a long time unable to persuade himself that the Bill had been drafted by any serious person. He could hardly imagine three gentlemen sitting down to consider what a *bonâ fide* case was; what were the circumstances of the district and the circumstances of the eviction; and the other mysterious reasons suggested by the Bill for the purpose of reinstating a tenant. Why, those gentlemen were to be absolutely entrusted with powers that he had never known to be entrusted before to a judicial or any other body in this Kingdom. It was said, "Trust those Arbitrators; they are three most respectable gentlemen." But there were some things that no person could be entrusted with. Were the Arbitrators to be allowed to put back every insolent tenant, every idler, every man who had drunk himself out of his farm since 1879? But when they appointed a lawyer of great eminence, assisted by two other eminent gentlemen, he gathered that it was intended that they should exercise some discretion, and consider who they were to admit, and who they were not to admit. Why was there no guidance given to those gentlemen? Was the whole matter to be left to their whim? Was the assistance to be awarded according to merit, and were those tenants to be considered the most meritorious who had defended their houses with pitchforks and stones, and had broken the heads of the police? Was that to be the test of merit or the reverse? From the beginning of the Bill to the end there was not a line to guide the tribunal about to be appointed. He fancied that if, in the course of their Roving Commission, the Commissioners rejected the claim of anyone, their lives would be very unenviable, and they would have to be provided with bullet-proof cuirasses. What struck him as most extraordinary in this matter was that there was not even a pretence of finality about the Bill. He had heard English Radicals, one after the other, say that this was only the beginning, and that they would go on to further measures; so that they were to have, not merely an Evicted Tenants Bill, but an evicted tenants code, for the purpose of dealing with the question. With regard to the new tenants, an hon. Member had said that where conditional orders were made against them they would be influenced by moral suasion. Another hon. Member had said they would be influenced by a moral blunderbuss—a particularly unfortunate expression. If the hon. Member for Mayo went amongst the new tenants he would probably, starting with a preamble that no crime was to be permitted, make a speech to the effect that nobody was to deal with them and that they were to be isolated and left to manage as best they could. Would that be effective? He believed it would. It would be possible to reduce every one of the tenants, even assuming that no outrage was committed at all. It must be remembered that these new tenants were men to whom the credit of the nation was pledged. They entered into their farms at a time when an infamous conspiracy was being denounced by every lawyer in the Kingdom, and by others who had authority to speak on the subject of morality. Were these men now to be delivered over to the tender mercies of their enemies? Were they to be compelled to leave their farms notwithstanding all the labour bestowed on their cultivation? Hon. Members said the Bill would only affect the Irish landlords, whom they did not care for; but he would point out that it would affect the tenants a great deal more. The biggest landlord in Ireland was not the Marquess of Clanricarde, but the British taxpayer. He was becoming a bigger and bigger landlord every day, though he was only in receipt of a rent-charge which was terminable. And supposing at some future time an Irish political leader ordered that the instalments to the State should not be paid, would the Government get men from the North of Ireland to take the holdings? They might call long and loud, but they would never get these men to come again. If there was to be any respect for law, the new tenants could not be abandoned. The hon. Member for East Mayo was very frank. He rarely concealed his opinions. In 1891, at Drogheda, he made some observations which were very instructive.

MR. DILLON: They appeared in *The Times* of this morning.

MR. ROSS said, he was glad to hear that the hon. Member's sayings were so widely disseminated. The hon. Member had said it would be hopeless for any Irish political leader again to call on Irish tenants to make sacrifices for the cause if the Plan of Campaign tenants were left in the lurch. That was a strong statement. What did it mean? It meant that this measure was a political move for the purpose of advancing the political cause championed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo. The Plan of Campaign had been defended on the ground of the excessive rents which had been charged, but it was no use saying that to people who lived in the country. Such a statement could not be made in regard to the Olphert Estate, which, perhaps, had had a larger number of these tenants upon it than any other estate. It was for a political purpose that the tenants had been driven out of their holdings; they had not gone because they were unable to pay the rent, and it would be a monstrous thing to compel the landlord to put them back against his will. Were they dealing with serious legislation? Would such a Bill be entertained in any other country in the world? It was more like the libretto of a comic opera than a piece of serious legislation. The return in triumph of the evicted tenants would be the glorification of lawlessness, showing men that they had only to struggle long enough in order to get the British Parliament into such a weak-headed condition that it would be prepared to whitewash offenders who had done any amount of mischief in Ireland. But he had something to say on the money question. It had been calmly assumed by some Irish Members that this money was their own. They said, "It is an Irish fund, and how could it be better spent than on these unfortunate people?" He did not deny that there was suffering amongst the evicted tenants, but they were not the only class who had suffered and were suffering in Ireland. If the evicted tenants had suffered, so had many artizans in Ireland who had never entered into any political plot or attempted to defraud any man; but Parliament could not make its legislation subservient to sentiment. It had been suggested that this was a subject for compromise, but it was clear that the Party below the Gangway did not desire a compromise. The truth was, the Bill was never intended to pass. If it had been, it would have been drawn in a more moderate spirit, in which case the Opposition would have been prepared to go a long way to meet it. But, as a matter of fact, this was only one of the many bubbles blown by the Government for their supporters to catch at. It was, perhaps, the greatest bubble of all, and no one would be very much surprised when it burst and resolved itself into its constituent elements of soap and water.

*MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal, W.) said, this Bill had been very violently denounced by Irish landlords and by Irish lawyers. This House and the people of Great Britain ought to know by this time that Irish landlords and Irish lawyers were very bad advisers. He should like to know what Bill of relief or of reform to the people of Ireland was ever passed or proposed in that House that had not the opposition of Irish landlords and the Irish Tory lawyers? They had been told that night that five Land Bills had been passed within a limited space of time for the relief of the Irish people. Which of these five Bills was ever supported in that House by the Irish landlords or by the disinterested lawyers of the Tory Party? Not one. Every one of them in its time was opposed and denounced as the present healing and righteous measure was being denounced. He believed the character and nature of the proposals now before the House were pretty well understood by the House of Commons and the people of England. But why were these five Bills necessary? Because not one sufficient, complete, or satisfactory Land Bill had been passed or would be passed by the Parliament in those days, or had any chance of being passed by the House of Lords. Even when the Irish tenants had friends in the House of Commons the Bills were drawn up in such a way that they could be nothing but unsatisfactory and incomplete, because of the consciousness of the framers of them that peril and defeat awaited them in another place. All along in the Debate that had taken place on this Bill it appeared to be quietly assumed by its opponents that the evicted tenants were dishonest people, and that they had acted fraudulently as well as illegally. As to illegality he did not say much. There had been times in Ireland, and perhaps they would come again, when good men and honest men were bound in honour and in conscience to have very little regard for the letter of the law. He hoped those times would not come again; but was there a man in the House who could deny that such times did come in Ireland? If they committed acts which were considered illegal in Ireland, they did so from a sense of duty to their country, and if the occasion should arise again, the Irish people and their Representatives would be able to take action and do as they had done before. The hon. Members who spoke about five Land Bills knew very well the reason why the present Bill had to be introduced. A situation arose that had become intolerable, and which required that the state of things existing in Ireland should be revised. Everyone knew that there had been a fall in prices, bad seasons, and bad crops, and that the Irish people had been compelled to agitate again and again for revisions and remissions of rents. In England no such revision was necessary, because the English landlords had a higher sense of justice, and had more sympathy with their tenants, than the Irish landlords. In his (Mr. Sullivan's) constituency there were, and had been, a large number of evicted tenants. Were they to be stigmatised as rogues and frauds, and as dishonest men? He absolutely denied that any epithet of that character could properly be applied to them. They had been evicted for the non-payment of cruel and extortionate rents, against the payment of which they had been struggling for many a long and bitter year. How did they manage to pay those rents? Was it out of the produce of this soil? By no means. They made the rents by coming over to England and Scotland in the harvesting season, during which they worked, and in that way they earned what the Irish landlords afterwards claimed as rent. He had heard the word "robbery" applied to Irish tenants in the course of the Debate that night. He asserted that the epithet went appropriately the other way round. It had been proved beyond doubt by the decisions in the Land Courts, where the tenants got their rents reduced often by 15 and 20 per cent., that the landlords all along had been guilty of robbery, for such it was, even though they had the sanction of the law to exact those rents. He claimed for the evicted tenants of Donegal and of other parts of Ireland that they had borne this burden too long; that at last they were compelled to strike against it, for it was a duty they owed to their wives and their families and their class. Did not everybody know that if these men had not taken this strong measure they would have waited a long time before relief would have come to them from the House of Commons, or before the hearts of the Ulster landlords or the Ulster Tory lawyers would have been touched? He claimed for these tenants that they did not deserve the epithets that had been hurled at them. He claimed they were driven to the course they adopted not by the speeches of agitators, but by the hard and stern necessities of the case. Let no man tell him that any agitator in Ireland, no matter how eloquent he might be, had the power of inducing large masses of Irish people to act contrary to their own interests and their own knowledge and conception of what was requisite. The so-called "influence of the agitator" arose in this way — that he voiced the grievances and spoke the sentiments of the Irish people. If he did not do that, his eloquence would be wasted on the east wind or the west wind, as the case might be. There had been a real trouble and wrong at the bottom of all this long agitation, contention, and strife in Ireland, and he hoped the House of Commons would not be led away by appeals to sentiments of sympathy for the poor suffering Irish landlords. Amnesty was asked for these poor fellows. For how many years and generations had they been draining the heart's blood of the Irish people and making miserable the homes of Irish tenants, who were then taunted by English writers with their poverty and squalor? A most important question was at that moment awaiting settlement. The time was critical for the hopes of Ireland and the peace of the whole country, and he hoped the House of Commons would deal with the question promptly and generously, so that the Bill might not be lost. Some men were labouring to bring about that result, and it was no use attempting to pass off the blame of failure upon the Representatives of the Irish people, who were asked for humiliation before any promise of concession was made to them. They had heard something about a soap bubble from the last speaker. What sort of a bubble would it be if the Irish Members were to pledge themselves, as they had been asked to do, to accept this Bill as a complete pacification and settlement, in the sense and degree that not a word should ever more be said in Ireland, no matter how things might go, in favour of better terms for the Irish tenant farmers? The Irish Members were asked to make these protestations, but where was the security that if this were made a voluntary measure it would be availed of and accepted honestly and heartily by the Irish landlords? The way to deal with this question of the evicted tenants was in the spirit of the Bill as it had been brought before the House by Her Majesty's Government. It did not quite fulfil the desires or hopes of the Irish people, but no doubt it would have a healing effect. It would be attended with beneficial results and produce peace amongst the Irish people. He believed it would act as a blessing in the country that it would relieve suffering; that it would work not injustice, but justice, and that it would calm and cool in many an Irish heart the feelings which now, perhaps, existed there, and which might, he feared, be blown into flame if this measure were ignominiously rejected in the House of Commons or elsewhere, and if unhappily effect should be given to the opinions of the irreconcilables who had spoken from above the Gangway.

Mr. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow) said, he must enter his protest against the Third Reading of the Bill, because he believed that instead of leading to the pacification of Ireland, it would tend in entirely the opposite direction. Not only would this be the case, but the measure would form a precedent for further legislation, which would tend to displace the conditions now existing between landlords and tenants. In his view, the measure in all its provisions violated the sanctity of contract. All our troubles in Ireland had arisen out of the fact that the Legislature had violated what should be the first principles of legislation there. Observations had been made from the other side of the House, and especially by the Chief Secretary, as to those who had taken up a *non possumus* attitude upon the Bill. He entered his protest against the anxiety which some hon. Gentlemen had shown to disclaim this attitude. Either the Bill was right or it was wrong. If it was right there ought to be no opposition to it, and if it was wrong why should they object to anyone attributing to them a *non possumus* attitude? If they made the Bill a thoroughly voluntary measure, and destroyed its compulsory provisions, then they might assume an attitude wholly different. For his own part, he should be perfectly open to consider a voluntary method of procedure if he thought it was calculated to relieve the difficulties of administration in Ireland. But then the question arose, what voluntary measure could possibly be devised which would satisfy the hon. Members behind him (the Irish Members)? They had evidence of what the notions of the hon. Gentlemen were with regard to what was voluntary, and they knew that they might have a nominally voluntary measure, but that it might be one which would in effect be compulsory. An instance of the way in which misconception might arise upon this point arose in the case of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin, who put it to the House that this really was a voluntary measure. The hon. Gentleman put to them the argument—where was the compulsion in a case where the landlord might choose, instead of accepting a man as a tenant, to have him as the purchaser of the farm, and insist upon his purchasing? An argument of that kind was really too much strain upon one's patience. A landlord had a rebellious tenant; he was evicted after a great deal of trouble, and the landlord got no rent; yet this man was to be replaced on the farm, with all the rights of a freeholder, and settle himself perhaps in the midst of an estate where he might give no end of trouble to the landlord, and oppose him in every possible way, and the landlord was held to be under no compulsion, merely because he could, if he choose, force the obnoxious tenant to purchase. The hon. Member for the Harbour Division might take exceptional views as to what was a voluntary proceeding, but if one had to take back a man expelled from an estate, and accept him as a purchaser at a price to be fixed by hostile Commissioners, surely that was not a voluntary proceeding, but rather a shameful and wicked infliction on the landlord. The hon. Member said it was a voluntary feature of the Bill that the new tenant was not compelled to come out. He (Mr. Ambrose) granted that if the new tenant objected to give up his farm, the Arbitrators might say that they could not proceed further in the matter. But before they came to that, there was the fact to be considered that the evicted tenant had a right to petition, and if he petitioned, his petition came before the Commissioners, who had to decide whether he was a new tenant or an old tenant. They could imagine what would be likely to be the result of that. Again, the new tenant might be denounced as a grabber, and his life was not likely to be a happy one; and if he came into open Court, he would be simply exposing himself as a target for the Irish Land League. Landlords were entitled to consideration as much as any other class, and the House ought not to violate the first principles of legislation in destroying freedom of contract, but to respect their rights, and to afford them that justice which ever distinguished that House in its transactions. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Donegal seemed to grasp the position involved in the Bill as well as anybody. He said there were cases in which men who were true patriots were bound in honour and in conscience to act illegally. He (Mr. Ambrose) did not know how far hon. Gentlemen around him were actuated by those sentiments, but they were evidently on dangerous ground now. Whatever might be the opinion of hon. Gentlemen, however, he regarded the principle as a dangerous one, and one which he must ask the House not to adopt. If there was one place in the Kingdom where justice ought to me maintained it was in that House, and the landlords were as much entitled to that justice as anybody else. The Chief Secretary had drawn attention to the difference between the English and the Irish tenant, and used it as an argument in favour of the Bill. He (Mr. Ambrose) took an entirely different view. The English tenant was bound by contract. He accepted his tenancy and was bound by his contract, and if he did not pay his rent he was not allowed to remain in possession, but must give up his farm to somebody who could and would pay the rent. That was a principle necessary to the proper cultivation of the soil. But by a whole series of Acts of Parliament the condition of the Irish tenant had been altogether altered, and he was now, owing to this legislation, in the condition of a part-owner of the farm. What was done by the Act of 1882, which he had only just looked into? There the struggle was for the "three f's"—free sale, fair rent, and fixity of tenure—and it was said that when the tenants had got that they could not be turned out by the landlords, and that so long as a tenant had these three he practically owned the property. In dealing with cases of that sort it was not like dealing with a man whom they could turn out of the tenancy upon six months' notice, expiring at the end of the year; they were not dealing with a man dependent solely upon the produce of the soil for the actual payment of the rent, because the interest of the tenant in the soil had become a property that would fetch on sale from 18 to 20 years' purchase, and sometimes as much as 22 years' purchase. In the majority of instances the tenant right and the tenant's interest would fetch a larger price than the land itself. The result was that in Ireland, where the Land Acts applied, the landlords were no longer landlords; they were mere rent-chargers, being placed in the position by virtue of an Act of Parliament. It was said upon the passing of the Act of 1882 that the landlord's rights should not be further interfered with; but how had Parliament kept faith with the landlords from that time? They had been still further encroaching on the landlords' rights by first one Act and then another, until, by a final Act, even leaseholders were included, and the various tenants had had their rents reduced until they had become practically the owners of the property. When the hon. Member for Donegal talked of the reduction of these rents he (Mr. Ambrose) was struck with the inconsequential character of the observations the hon. Member made, though he had heard the same remarks made before many times. The remarks were, that because the Commissioners, or the Judges appointed to fix fair rents, as they were called, had considerably reduced the rents, had continued to reduce them according as the produce of the farm yielded one year less and another more, that each reduction that took place according to the hon. Member for Donegal, was a proof that the tenant was enormously rackrented. It was nothing of the kind. It might be that the Commissioners were justified; he did not impeach their decision, but he protested against it being said the tenants were enormously rackrented; it was nothing of the kind, it was only a carrying out of the Act of Parliament. If they had not had the rents reduced below the actual value of the property, would the tenant right, he asked, have fetched 18, 20, and even 22 years' purchase? When hon. Members talked about rackrenting, especially after the Act of 1882, he replied that the fact that the tenant right would fetch these large sums was proof that the tenants were not over-rented. The effect of the policy of the Land Act and of the Acts carrying out the Land Act, had been to transfer a large portion of the interest from the landlord to the tenant, and to place them in a position wholly different to the position of any tenant in England, or in any other part of the civilised world. He challenged any hon. Gentleman to tell him of any country in the world where the tenants had been so favoured as had been the Irish tenants. Therefore, he accepted the view of the Chief Secretary when he said the position of the Irish tenant was not like that of the English tenant, and he held that that view was hostile to the Bill, and was hostile to the suggestion that there was any ground for the present measure. One point that occurred to him in regard to this was that this kind of thing was most damaging to the cultivation of the soil. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, it was so, because instead of the tenant being stimulated to cultivate the soil in the best manner, and obtain from it the largest amount of produce, his aim was to neglect cultivation in order to show a small production against the time the revision of rents came round, so that he could again get the rent reduced. That, he maintained was destructive to the welfare of Ireland, and would be destructive to the welfare of every country. The policy of our laws should be to encourage thrift, to let people understand that when they took land they were under the obligation of paying the rent they had agreed to pay and which had been fixed by judicial tribunal, and that they were bound to produce from the farm the utmost it was capable of producing. That policy had been abandoned, and unthrifty cultivation had taken its place for the purpose of getting rents reduced at the period of revision and when those appeals were made to the Legislature which came regularly as every Parliament met. But what struck him as the most serious matter they had to grapple with was the fact that this demand for the reduction of rent had arisen, not because the tenants had found themselves unable to pay the rents that had been demanded, but because they had been made the subjects of a manifestation of judicial rents. ["Hear, hear!"] Yes, hon. Gentlemen behind him said "hear, hear"; he was glad they appreciated the point. No attempt had been made to produce before this House the case previously put forward before the Mathew Commission of lands lying uncultivated, of evicted tenants living in huts in the neighbourhood of those lands, practically preventing the cultivation of them, living in comparative starvation, suffering hunger and presenting a real case of distress. If and so far as there were cases of real distress, caused by an honest inability to pay the rents demanded, his hand would be held up and his vote given in support of the Bill. Show him a real case of distress and he was not behind any man, he would yield to no man in the House, wherever he might sit, in his willingness to relieve it. But what evidence did he find of it in this case? He had seen none; none had been presented to the House, and none was presented before the Mathew Commission. What he found was that the whole thing was laid down as a scheme by Mr. Davitt, one of the ablest of the Irish leaders, as far back as 1880. The Bill proposed to deal with tenancies determined since 1879, a date which was about the commencement of the agitation, and they found that in 1880, in Kansas City, Mr. Davitt said they had declared an unceasing war against landlordism, not a war calling on their people to shoulder the rifle and go out in the open field and settle the question agitating Ireland—though he was not opposed to that provided he could see a chance of success—but a war against Irish landlordism, and by not paying any rent breaking down the English garrison in Ireland. In that, Mr. Davitt said, they were doing a proper work and were paving the way for that independence they desired to see; they were engaged in a peaceful revolution. The peaceful revolution these Irish leaders were engaged in was a land war that was to be worked out by a conspiracy for the non-payment of rent. Not that they always went for an absolute non-payment of rent. That was explained by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), or one of the Irish Members; it was to be a process of graduation, to reduce the rent from time to time until they had brought the rents down to a nominal amount. In the Report of the Special Commission the Commissioners referred to the fact that even Mr. Parnell boasted that, by virtue of the operation of the Land League, rents had been considerably reduced, so that if a land purchase scheme came on it would be based on the rents of that time. The Commissioners found that the respondents, including all the members who were made parties at that time,

> "Entered into a conspiracy, illegal both in its objects and in the means which were adopted, by a system of coercion and intimidation, to promote an agitation against the payment of agricultural rents for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords who were described as the English garrison."

That was the finding of a tribunal that was appointed by virtue of an Act of Parliament, which passed the Second Reading with the assent of hon. Members of this House, a tribunal whose impartiality had not been questioned. Thus it was established that the agitation was started first by Mr. Davitt in 1880, and that the Irish Members meant to have an agitation for non-payment of rent, which should aid a political movement. Instead of its being a case of distress, it was a case of agitation for political purposes; and the Legislature ought to realise the fact that in proportion as it yielded to agitation of that kind it would be promoted and increased. Assuming that it was a case of distress, why should Ireland alone be dealt with? There was distress all over the agricultural districts of England. What had the agricultural labourers in England done not to be legislated for? Was Parliament to confine its charitable operations to the Irish tenants? One of the most painful points in connection with this Bill was that the fact could not be disguised that it was the reward for the support hon. Members from Ireland had given to the Government during the last two years. The Government were bound to introduce and press forward this Bill as a debt due to the Irish Members who had kept them in Office. Had the Government the slightest hope or belief that the Bill could pass, their conscience might have been strong enough to enable them to resist such an iniquitous measure. But if it should pass this House it was capable of doing a very considerable mischief, because by passing it through this House the Government endangered, and very seriously endangered, the peace and prosperity of Ireland. They were creating hopes in Ireland that could never be realised; they were teaching the lesson to the agitators and the evicted tenants that the way to get rewarded was to violate the law, to carry out the principle the hon. Member for Donegal had asked this House to recognise, to have no respect for legality, to pursue their illegal course and trust to hon. Members in this House to secure them indemnity. Not only was it an injury to Ireland, but was such a violation of the first principles of legislation as would make property and labour insecure, and would make every man feel there was no such thing as right to be expected from the House of Commons, or indeed from the Legislature.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said, that in so far as the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down was at all relevant it was an attack upon the land legislation of the past 15 years, and it was an eloquent, glowing, and inconsequent vindication of free trade, and they were asked why they should not do something for the English labourer. He had read somewhere, at some time or other, that when English agriculture was very prosperous and wheat was fetching 100s. a quarter, the English labourer was worse off then than he was to-day. Perhaps, in the light of an argument of that kind, they might be able to attach a proper value to the observations of the hon. Gentleman on this question of the evicted tenants. They had to deal with the question as it stood in Ireland at the present time, and this House, and another place, would act wisely if they accepted this very important Bill. All through these Debates one thing had particularly struck him, and that was the absolute disregard that was shown by hon. Members for Irish public opinion in connection with this important matter. Was Irish public opinion of no importance in connection with this matter? Irish public opinion was very strong upon the point, and it had been expressed, he might say, without a dissentient voice. Ireland pleaded for the reinstatement of these Irish evicted tenants. In the past this House and Parliament—he spoke in an historical sense—had often treated Irish public opinion in this way, and had had cause to rue it. Another place that had been referred to had often treated Irish public opinion with contempt and disregard; it did so in 1880 in rejecting the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, a very moderate Bill, a Bill that sought to protect the roof-trees of these destitute tenants; but were the Irish landlords any better off in consequence? His hon. Friend the Member for Cork City (Mr. W. O'Brien) was accused of using the language of threats. His hon. Friend did nothing of the kind; he showed that the Bill did not contain provisions of the alarming character the hon. Member for Guildford considered them to be. The hon. Member's threat, if they would so call it, was this: that if they rejected the Bill they would have no guarantee for the continuance of social order in Ireland. His hon. Friend did not threaten them; he said that if the Bill passed every Party Leader in Ireland—that all Irish Societies would do all that could be done to work it in an honest and workable manner. His hon. Friend did not use a threat, but used the language of warning. As the rejection of the Bill of 1880, and the rejection of the Bill of 1886, introduced by Mr. Parnell to deal with the question of arrears, were followed by agitation, the hon. Member warned them, as all the Irish Members warned them, of what was likely to happen if this Bill were rejected. They—the reckless, hard-hearted, excited, sometimes merciless agitators—did not wish to see these things; they did not wish to see the present peaceable condition of things disturbed; they invited the House to cut the ground from under their feet, and by giving this Bill to send a message of peace and social order to Ireland. The hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) described a responsible Member of this House as an arbitrator. The hon. Member when he acted as arbitrator in the Committee upstairs never gave his vote for the tenant except on trivial Amendments, when he knew it would not hurt his own Party, and on such occasions the hon. Member was the most independent of all independent men; but when it became a crucial question between landlord and tenant, when it was a question of principle between rackrenting landlords and rackrented impoverished tenants then they found that, no matter what the argument might be, the vote of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) was always found against the tenant for whom he professed to have so much sympathy. An effort had been made during the course of these discussions, both on the Second Reading and in Committee, to confine the effect of the Bill to Plan of Campaign tenants. There was no justification for this attitude in the history of the agrarian struggle in Ireland; there was no justification for it in connection with the present state of the evicted tenants or of the Irish landlords. Let no one suppose that a single Member amongst the Irish Party would withdraw his sympathy from the Plan of Compaign, but they did not base their claim for the Bill on the Plan of Campaign. This Bill would not be confined to Plan of Campaign tenants, but there were thousands of tenants outside the combination to whom, it was hoped, the measure would apply. 1879 was a year of terrible distress—of bad crops and low prices. How did those landlords who had been pelted with pitiless panegyric to-night regard that distress? They denied the distress; they denied the fall in prices, and laughed at it. On the Kenmare estate, though the agent admitted before the Cowper Commission that he had seen the tenants famished and blue with hunger, it was denied that there was any distress. A Bill was brought in by the Irish Members to deal with the matter, but Parliament rejected the warnings of the Representatives of the

Irish people. Thousands of tenants flocked to the Land Court, but could not get their rents fixed. Some of them had to wait three, four, and five years before they could take advantage of the Land Act. In the meantime many of them were evicted, and to these the present Bill would come as a measure of relief, as they had been driven from their homesteads, and all their little property had been sacrificed. He could not say how many tenants were evicted pending a settlement, but there must have been close on 2,000. These people were evicted owing to the tardy legislation of Parliament—being unable to get fair rents fixed and not being able to pay the rackrents demanded of them. It was a physical impossibility to deal with the large number of originating notices that went before the Courts. In his own constituency the Land League was started in the County of Cork in 1880. In the western portion of the county bordering on Kerry was a small estate consisting of two farms, the rents of which were £30 and £38 odd. The land was marshy and of that kind most affected by the low prices that prevailed in 1879 and 1880. The tenants on these farms were evicted for one year's rent, after they had taken steps to serve their originating notices. The farms were taken possession of by a grabber, and from that day to this he had not paid his rent, and was not tilling the land properly. He was simply in possession as an example to people who would not do what the landlords desired them to do. There had been three policemen on these two farms. Each constable was supposed to represent £100 to the British taxpayer, so that the three constables would cost £300 a year, and that expenditure during 10 years would amount to £3,000. No doubt these grabbers, who in certain quarters were regarded as the salt of creation, would be glad to go out on receipt of fair compensation. If the land were given up in this case a saving to the taxpayer of £300 a year would be effected. The extraordinary statement had been made by the hon. Member for North Armagh that the average tenant was not evicted by the average landlord in Ireland unless he owed at least five years' rent. An examination of the Appendix G of the Mathew Commission showed that such was not the case. He had taken three counties from each of the four provinces of Ireland in order to ascertain what were the average arrears of the evicted tenants who were not connected with the Plan of Campaign. He found that in Antrim the tenants were evicted for an average of 1½ years' rent, in Armagh for an average of 2¾ years' rent, and in Cavan for an average of 2·15 years. In Carlow the average was 2·10, in Dublin it was 1·50, and in Kildare it was 1·90. In Galway the average was 2·35, in Roscommon it was 2·40, and in Sligo it was 3. In Clare it was 2·07, in Limerick 1·90, in Waterford 1·90, and in Cork 1·90. These figures effectually disposed of the remarks which Tory gentlemen were so fond of making—that the rent amounted to 4 or 5 years. In the case of the Plan of Campaign tenants the average was between 2 and 2½ years, and much of that included arrears. In Ireland the arrears had accumulated almost from generation to generation. In England the landlords frequently made remissions of perhaps 40 per cent. to the struggling agriculturists to meet times of depression; but in Ireland, instead of making such remissions, the landlord would pile up the 40 per cent. as arrears, so that if ever they wanted to come down upon the tenants they could always bring the arrears against them. The opinion of the Irish people on this question of the evicted tenants could not be mistaken. For several years past, and especially since the present Government came into Office, Public Bodies all over the country who were interested in social order and peace in Ireland, and who could not be supposed to have any innate or inborn sympathy with dishonesty, had, with very few exceptions, passed resolutions in favour of the Bill. If there was one portion of the addresses and speeches of the Nationalist Members during the General Election of 1892 which gave more satisfaction than another, it was their declarations that they would do all in their power to bring before Parliament a Bill of this kind. Unionist speakers had often said that they could not grant Ireland Home Rule, but that they would grant what was fair and reasonable in regard to Irish internal affairs. This

Bill was a test of the genuineness of these declarations. To him, personally, wishing as he did for peace and order in Ireland, it had been a keen and bitter disappointment to find how the measure had been met. The Irish Representatives thought it all too little, but, such as it was, if it were to pass into law they would do all they could to recommend it to their people, and to make it work equitably as between landlord and tenant. There existed no power on earth—no power in Parliament, and no power in Birmingham or Manchester—that could prevent the Irish people giving expression to their feeling of dislike and detestation of the land-grabber. If Ireland had been quiet in the past two years and more; if there had been no outbreak of disorder, it was because the people had exercised a phenomenal patience and put a restraint on themselves in connection with this burning question which he could not always guarantee they would do. If the House rejected a moderate measure of this kind that restraint would be withdrawn, and there was no power in this Parliament which could prevent public opinion being exercised in such a manner as would teach both landlords and new tenants that Irish public opinion was sorely and grievously dissatisfied with the condition of things that at present obtained. While there was yet time the House would do well to pass this Bill by a large majority. He would entreat the House not to repeat the mistake made by another Chamber in 1886, but to send this message of peace and reconciliation to Ireland, trusting that it would do good to the tenants, to the landlords, and to all who were interested in the prosperity of the country.

MR. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had made a great point of Irish public opinion. In discussing a Bill of this kind, however, there was another public opinion to take into account, and that was English public opinion. Reference had been made to the tropical imagination of some Members of the House. He did not think that those who had listened to the Debate could fail to consider that that description applied to the imaginations of gentlemen below the Gangway. They had dealt with the Bill not as a subject for immediate and practical legislation, but as a subject for sentiment and for a great deal of hysterics. It was asked what guarantee was there, if this Bill was rejected, that there would be order in Ireland. If, however, the House passed the Bill, what guarantee was there that there would be order in Ireland, or that the measure would bring about that position of peace and security which the Nationalist Members promised? He himself saw no finality about the Bill. He only saw a most inadequate measure which was to take the place of the Bill, which, if it were brought forward at all, ought to be full and thorough. He wished to deal with the matter from the point of view of an English County Member. He thought that an English County Member and a small English landlord like himself had a right to enter into a question of this kind, which affected the agrarian credit of the whole country. What was Irish agrarian law to-day was English agrarian law to-morrow. There had been one speech from a Radical County Member, who had talked very glibly about Land Courts and other subjects which arose out of the question of Irish land legislation. These were matters which he thought must sometimes come within the sphere of English agriculture. It was only fair to ask what effect this measure would have upon the agriculture of this country? After all, there were more English agricultural Members in this House than there were Irish agricultural Members. Irish public opinion might be strongly in favour of this Bill, but he thought that English public opinion ought to be taken into account also, and that was strongly against the Bill. Supposing that after the success of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) in turning out the tenants of the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry) in Tipperary he had gone down to the County of Cheshire, and had tried to bring out the tenants of the hon. Member for South Hunts in that county, and supposing those tenants had gone out, would an evicted tenants' question have been started in Cheshire? If so, would it have been possible to bring forward some local trust, say the Weaver Trust, for the reinstatement of the evicted tenants of the hon. Member for South

Hunts? He thought that, in the first place, the Cheshire tenants would have laughed at the hon. Member for Cork; and even if they had gone out an evicted tenants question would never have been raised, because the evicted tenants would have gone by the board and other tenants, would have taken their places. He knew that all the evicted tenants in Ireland were not Plan of Campaign tenants, but still the House could not get over the fact that except for the Plan of Campaign this question would never have been brought forward. But for Plan of Campaign tenants, who were promised that they should lose nothing by going out, and who in many cases had lost everything, the House of Commons would never have been troubled with this Bill. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) had stated that he had never prevented people in Ireland from taking advantage of the clemency which was held out to them by the exceptional agrarian laws of Ireland. But the most notable point of the speech of the hon. Member for Derry (Mr. Ross) was that in which he showed that the hon. Member for East Mayo had in one case prevented the tenants on a certain estate from taking advantage of the clemency of the Irish agrarian laws. English County Members could not close their eyes to the fact that this Bill would assist men who had gone out of their holdings knowing perfectly well that they could pay their rent. The Bill was brought in not only to whitewash the leaders of the Plan of Campaign, but to reinstate tenants who had been party to a conspiracy, and could have paid but had refused to do so. He did not say that all the evicted tenants were in this position; but all the provisions of this Bill were overshadowed by the fact that it was a Plan of Campaign Bill, and that it arose out of an unlawful conspiracy. This would be the first time in the history of Parliament, if this Bill passed, that the law of the League had become the law of the land. In considering the speech of the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) Members could not forget that he had in a very large degree been the vehicle for a great deal of the distress that had been brought on the Irish tenants. It was too late now to resurrect the Plan of Campaign story, but when such a Bill was brought forward the hon. Member's connection with that organisation could not be forgotten. The hon. and learned Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane), in his very able speech on the Second Reading, asked the House to bury the hatchet. Never would the hatchet be buried until the Member for Cork and some of his friends had been buried also. [*Nationalist cries of* "Oh!"] He did not mean that they should be given their quietus, but that the House of Commons would never listen to a proposal for reinstating the evicted tenants until certain of the ringleaders of the Plan of Campaign had withdrawn from the position they had taken up with regard to that organisation. He had no wish that this Bill should be turned into a question of compromise. He did not think that was a subject which would allow of discussion. The Bill would be a very bad example in the future not only in Ireland but in England, and would destroy all good feeling which should exist between landlords and tenants. On those grounds it ought to be rejected.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON (Devonport) trusted that no words which he might utter would tend to widen the breach between the two sides in this controversy. He would explain to hon. Members opposite, whose bitterness in this controversy was due to the fact, or rather was intensified by the fact, that attacks had been made from time to time in the course of the Debate on Irish landlords, that the supporters of the Bill did not allude to the whole of the landlords of Ireland, but to those particular Irish landlords who would be affected by the Bill. He admitted cordially that a large proportion of the Irish landlords were not unkind or cruel landlords; but if they took the tenants who had been evicted since 1879, and who would claim under that Bill, he thought he should not be far wrong in saying that the landlords of those tenants were not men the like of whom could be found among the landlords of England. They had been engaged in this controversy over the Irish question for the past eight years in an acute form, and yet it would appear from the Debate that even now some Members had not mastered the elementary facts of the land question. He was particularly struck by the remarks of the hon. Member for the Harrow Division and the hon. Member for the Tradeston Division of Glasgow. Both of those hon. Members stated that Ireland enjoyed a system of land laws more favourable to the tenants than existed in any other country in the world. If they looked at the matter technically, or from a legal point of view, or as it appeared on paper, he admitted that that was true; but if they took account of the circumstances of the case in Ireland, the economic conditions of Ireland, the customs that had grown up in Ireland, and a series of unfortunate circumstances which confined the Irish people to the land, then they would see that the condition of the tenant in Ireland was worse than that of the tenant in any civilised country. The opponents of measures like the Bill before the House frequently compared the Irish farmer and the Irish land system with the English farmer and the English land system; but those hon. Gentlemen altogether forgot the fundamental difference between the two systems. Although there were land grievances in this country, those grievances, great as they were, only immediately and directly affected a minority of the people. The difference was that the people in Great Britain earned their living, not by tilling the land, but by engaging in other industries, while in Ireland the great mass of the people had no means of earning their daily bread except by agriculture. In Ireland there were next to no non-agricultural industries. The mass of the Irish people had no other methods of employment than agriculture. This Parliament in the last and the preceding century crushed out—and deliberately crushed out, as the Preambles of the Acts showed—the Irish industries which were started at the same time as the English industries, and the result was the Irish tenant was now absolutely under the heel of the landlord. Well, the first effect of that was that the Irish landlord never made permanent improvements like the English landlord, or like the English landlord paid for the permanent improvements made by the tenant. The Irish tenant, or his father before him, or his grandfather before him, reclaimed the land from the bog, gathered the stones to build his little hut; put up the shed for the cow or the pigstye; and his love for his little holding was so great—greater even than the Englishman's proverbial love for his home—that when the landlord said to him, "You must give up that holding unless you pay the rent I demand," the effect was that the tenant would promise to pay rent which he could not pay in order to avoid eviction and exile from Ireland, which he feared worse than death itself. That was the real basis of the land difficulty. The common history of eviction since 1879 was that the tenant had obtained a small portion of unproductive moorland, and by three or four years' labour had reclaimed it, and that when the holding was of some value the landlord increased the rent—["No!"]—though he himself had not expended a sixpence on it. That was a common case.

Mr. BRODRICK: What about the Land Act of 1881?

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON said, he was speaking of the beginning of the history of those holdings. He contended that the Irish landlord never had any claim at all to the rent. The English tenant knew that nine-tenths of the value of the holding which he took had been created by labour and capital not his own. Even the most extreme land nationaliser or Socialist had never contended that rent should not be paid in England. The only question was to whom the rent should be paid. But the Irish tenant knew that all the value of his holding had been created by himself, or his father and grandfather; and to ask him to pay rent on the value he had created himself was legalised robbery. Although he was not particularly fond of landlords as a class, he should say that it was a slander on the English landlord to compare him with the Irish landlords. When land had been reclaimed by the tenant, the Irish landlord raised the rent of the holding.

Mr. BRODRICK: Will the hon. Gentleman quote a case where the landlord raised the rent on account of improvements made by the tenant, and where eviction followed?

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON said, that every single case of eviction between 1879 and 1881 was an illustration of the statement.

Mr. BRODRICK: Quote a case.

MR. E. J. C. MORTON said, he could quote hundreds of cases of evictions between 1879 and 1881, in which the value of the holdings were made by the tenants; where the tenants were rack-rented on their own improvements, and then when bad times came, and could not meet those rents, were evicted. There was the case of Mrs. Ahearn on the Glensharrold estate. Her husband had sold all the stock on the farm to pay the rent on his own improvements under threat of eviction; then the furniture went, and finally the widow was turned out of the bare house. That was a sample of the iniquitous robbery of Irish tenants by Irish landlords. The Plan of Campaign was referred to. There were two methods of treating the Plan of Campaign by hon. Gentlemen opposite, which was very inconsistent. They were extremely angry with it on the one hand, while they called it a despicable failure on the other hand. Under just laws and under a Constitution where the people had the power to make their own laws this Plan of Campaign could not be possibly defended; but as it was the Plan of Campaign was the war of an unarmed people. That was its justification, and as to its justification from the point of view of success, it was adopted on nearly 100 estates, and it succeeded absolutely on 80 of them. Besides that, there were an enormous number of settlements made by landlords with the knowledge of the Plan of Campaign in their minds. He welcomed the Bill as the first step towards a reorganisation of the whole land system. It was objected that the Bill was vague and uncertain, and that the word "unreasonableness" as to the conduct of the landlord or the tenant in the case, which the Arbitrators had to take into account, which was used in the Bill, had no legal definition. That was an objection which came with an ill grace from a party whose leader, in almost the last act of his tenure of office, created the new crime of oppression by a County Council, without a word of definition. The conditions to be dealt with in Ireland were revolutionary in character, and altogether anomalous; and the only hope of an adequate settlement was by some such method as that which the Bill proposed. He did not see how they could deal with the difficulty if they were met with legal definitions at every turn. Of the Arbitrators, two were avowed opponents of Nationalist politics, and the third had, in his profession as a solicitor, probably represented the landlords in the Land Courts more than any other solicitor in Ireland. It showed a strange want of faith in their own views on the part of hon. Members opposite to distrust the discretion of such a Commission. They had been asked to reject the Bill because hon. Members opposite had not been allowed to discuss it; but if it had not been for the magnificent display of their dignity, which they made by leaving the House in a body, and so creating a political strike, hon. Members might have been discussing the Committee stage of the Bill at this moment. The Tory Party invariably used the argument in regard to Ireland which he could only describe as "heads I win, tails you lose." When Ireland was quiet they said there was no demand for reform; and when Ireland was on the verge of rebellion they said they could not yield to force. It seemed to him that hon. Gentlemen opposite would consult the dignity not only of Parliament and of the country, but of their Party, if they seized upon this moment of peace and quiet in Ireland to effect a settlement of this question. But he doubted whether they would do so. Since the magnificent speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin there had been a talk of compromise, and hon. Members opposite had declared that they desired compromise if only they could get it. He trusted that the expressed desire for compromise was sincere. Within a few days they would know whether it was sincere or not. The Bill, after it had left that House, would have to run the gauntlet of another Institution which in recent years seemed to have become a portion of the family estate of the family to which the Leader of the Opposition belonged. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman and his Party could in that Institution get any amendment they desired made in the Bill, and if they were sincere in their desire for a compromise the Bill would return to the House altered and transfigured by the genius of the Opposition. But if they did not see the Bill again altered and transformed, then he did not think the Party opposite could claim that their expressed desire for compromise was sincere. He was sorry to know that the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh, backed subsequently by the Leader of the Opposition, had declared that the Bill would not come back, but would be defeated and destroyed in another place by a majority consisting wholly of landlords, who represented nobody but themselves and safeguarded no interests but their own. He desired to place before the House the peculiar cruelty of the situation in this respect. In the eyes of all foreign nations, and in the eyes, he believed, of the majority of the English people, the treatment of Ireland by England in the past had been cruel treatment. In times past, when Lord Palmerston protested against the cruel oppressions of Austria in Italy, and the cruel oppression of Russia in Poland, he was desired to look to England's treatment of Ireland. But that treatment was not inflicted by the people of England, but by her aristocratic rulers, without the knowledge or consent of the people. Now that the people had obtained power in the House of Commons they had determined that the blot upon their otherwise fair fame should be swept away; but the same aristocratic rulers came in and said the people should not be permitted to wipe out this foul blot from their fair fame. He had only one word more to say. This question had been declared by the greatest Leader that House had had in modern times to be an urgent one, and if the Bill was rejected by those who represented none but themselves, it would be one further step towards freeing the people in England as well as the people of Ireland from a domination which they held in contempt.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, I had not intended to take any part in this discussion, but I am tempted to say a few words upon the speech to which we have just listened. Perhaps the hon. Member may be surprised that I attach so much importance to his speech, but it is, I venture to say, a typical speech. It is really an exact representation of what I may call the platform oratory of the Party to which the hon. Member belongs. There has not been, I venture to say, one single argument or sentence in the course of that speech which has been directed to this Bill before the House, and the whole speech has been—I should flatter the hon. Member if I called it an effort of the imagination—but an effort of memory, for it is a pure repetition of speeches which we have heard a hundred times before. If there was any argument in that speech it was an argument not in favour of this Bill, but against the payment of rent at all. The hon. Gentleman has told us in so many words that in Ireland the whole value of property has been made by the tenant, and that nothing whatever belongs to the landlord.

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON: I expressly excluded myself from that interpretation. What I said was that I dealt first of all exclusively with the estates that would be affected by this Bill—that was the estates from which the tenants had been evicted since 1879. I stated that in the large majority of these cases that this was so.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is all very well. I am going to test the accuracy of the hon. Gentleman before I sit down. In the meantime, it is with the general character of his speech that I desire to deal; and I want to call the attention of the House—and to some extent of the people outside—to the fact that this is the rubbish with which it is sought to delude the electorate of this country. Why, Sir, anyone who listened to the hon. Gentleman, who talks about removing a blot from his fair fame by doing justice at this late hour to Ireland, would imagine that we had done nothing during the last 15 years to redress the grievances of Ireland. I am not here to deny that Ireland had grievances, as indeed had Scotland and England, and all parts of Her Majesty's dominions. This House exists, we know, to remove grievances; but for the last 15 years the greater part of our time has been spent solely in redressing the grievances of Ireland, and chiefly by the Party to which the hon. Member and I myself belong—the Liberal Party. Now, Sir, what is the position the hon. Member takes up? Does he mean to say that all this legislation—that all these successive Land Acts and other Acts passed for the benefit of Ireland have been of no effect, and that the grievances of Ireland remain exactly as they were? If that is his position, I would ask the

House whether they think it worth while to go on any longer wasting our time in passing Acts which produce no result, either in securing the gratitude of the Irish people or their Representatives, or the satisfaction and contentment of the hon. Member, or in removing that blot from his fair fame which causes him so much anxiety and trouble. I say it was all very well before the great series of legislation which began in 1870 with the Land Act of the right hon. Member for Midlothian, and the Church Act, and which has been followed continuously by further legislation—it was all very well before that commenced to talk of the grievances of the Irish tenants, which undoubtedly at that time were greater than the grievances of the English tenantry; but to say that after all our efforts and continuous legislation exactly the same language is to be used, word for word, and year after year, which we heard about these complaints 25 years ago, is to say that we have been engaged in an absolutely useless task, or that the hon. Member has been asleep for the past 25 years while other people have been working. Now, I said that I would test the accuracy of the hon. Member. He has told the House, as probably he has told many audiences throughout the country, where, I have no doubt, he is popular, and where imagination is always appreciated—he has told the House that these tenants, hundreds and thousands of them, were people upon whom the landlords had raised the rent again and again, and who had gone out from their holdings because they were unable to pay the rack-rents which the abominable injustice of the landlords had imposed upon them. All that, as the House knows, is absolutely impossible. What is the use of the great Land Act of 1880, which protected the improvements of the tenants, and of the impartial Court set up in order to establish judicial rents, if these grievances still continue, as the hon. Gentleman in his crass ignorance seems to think? And then, Sir, in the middle of his impassioned harangue, my hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Brodrick) asked him for a case. Oh, that was a fatal inquiry. Gentlemen who speak like the hon. Member are not accustomed on platforms to be asked for cases. The hon. Member was taken aback. He thought for a moment, and said, "I will give you a case, a typical case." This is the typical case—the case the hon. Member has inquired into, and by this case let the hon. Member stand or fall. It is the case of Mrs. Ahearn of the Glensharold Estate. Oh, take pity for the widow and orphan who was cruelly evicted from her tenancy, in which, bear in mind, she had made every improvement; she had built the little cottage with stones which she had picked up out of the field—the field was all stones previously; she built her little cottage with the stones, and made the land, and then the cruel landlord came down on her and raised her rent again and again, evicted her, and turned her out by the roadside because she could not pay his extortionate rent. Sir, will the House believe that Mrs. Ahearn was not a tenant at all? Mrs. Ahearn's case was one of a class of cases which are not infrequent in Ireland. The land was the land of Mr. Delmege; he had lived on the land; he made the land, improved it, put lime into it, and gave it all the value it possessed; and, having done this, he let the land for grazing, and in order that Mrs. Ahearn and other people in her position should not be tenants he let the grazing in some cases for five or six months, and in the case of Mrs. Ahearn for 11 months. She never had a year's tenancy.

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON: If this account is not pure imagination it must refer to a totally different case, because I know the case of Mrs. Ahearn. I have been over the holding, and at the time I saw it neither then nor at any previous time had there been any grazing on the holding at all.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will quote from Mr. T. W. Russell's work a description of the tenancy. It sets forth that Mrs. Kate Ahearn was never a tenant on the estate; that Mr. Delmege held the farm, known as the Cottage Farm, in his own possession; that he laid out a considerable sum in improving the farm, drained and manured it, laid it out in separate fields, and let the land to different people for grazing purposes. Michael Ahearn took four of those fields for 11 months at the rate of £10. After Ahearn died Mr. Delmege took the land, leaving the widow in the cottage, which was greatly dilapidated, and for which she had not been asked to pay anything. She was offered the grazing of the land, but she wanted to be recognised as a tenant, which, of course, could not be done.

Mr. E. J. C. MORTON said, that this was not the same case.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN : I should think that it was not, when the facts come to be correctly stated. The hon. Member says he knows hundreds and thousands of such cases, and that he can quote them in this House. If he does, I have no doubt we shall be able to deal with them as we have dealt with the case he has given. But, Sir, all this is beside the question. [Mr. Bodkin : It is.] Yes, it is beside the question, and yet that is the stuff by which the agricultural population in the country are deluded by the hon. Member for Devonport. I have thought it worth while for once to expose him in his presence. Now, Sir, I will say a word or two about the Bill. This Bill was brought in in its present form by the Government with the object of dealing, as they said, with the social and administrative difficulty of Ireland. Upon the Second Reading of the Bill it was perfectly evident what line would be taken by the Opposition. The Government and hon. Members opposite knew perfectly well what they could and what they could not get. They might have had a Bill providing for a voluntary arrangement, in the nature of the 13th clause of the Act of 1891, greatly extended in its operation by the help of the large sum of money which the Government had at their disposal for the purpose of carrying it into effect. If they had wanted an arrangement of that kind, which by their own confession this evening would have provided for nine-tenths of the evicted tenants, they could have had it. I am not stating that on my own authority, for I know nothing about it, but I take those figures from the statement of the hon. Member for Cork. Why have not the Government endeavoured to secure that arrangement? Why, the moment they found that the Opposition were willing to assent to such an arrangement they closured the Debate on the Bill, with the result that it became impossible for such an arrangement to be arrived at. The Government themselves have prevented that amicable settlement from being come to, and it is upon them that the responsibility for its not having been arrived at rests. The responsibility rests upon the Government in the first place, but in the second place it rests with hon. Members below the Gangway opposite. I am not blaming them for their action in the matter—they know their own interests best—but if they desired a settlement to be come to, nothing could have been easier than for them to have got up when they were in this House alone with the Government, and have given some intimation to that effect. But the hon. Members never made a sign. Let me state what is my position and that of those who think with me in this matter. We have not shown ourselves in the course of this Debate at all opposed to a settlement. We have all along pointed out that we were prepared to consider the case of the tenant who had left his holding owing to pressure, or to his having been deceived by the representations which had been made to him. We thought that such a tenant was worthy of our sympathy. Where we did not agree with the Government was in thinking that, for the purpose of settling this question, all principles of law and of justice were to be set aside. On the contrary, we thought that all the difficulty might be met without committing injustice. But we felt that there was one duty that was incumbent upon us to discharge—a duty that was even greater than to show sympathy with the evicted tenants—and that was that justice in the first place should be done to the new tenants—to the men who had taken the land and had worked it at the risk of their lives. Nothing would induce us to abandon those men—we are not such cowards, as in the hope of securing future peace and order in Ireland for ourselves, to betray the men who have trusted to British justice. In order to protect those men we sought to retain the veto of the landlords. What has the hon. Member for Cork said on this point to-night? The hon. Member had not the courage to state his meaning in plain language, but he threatened these men with what he described as "public opinion" in Ireland.

Mr. W. O'BRIEN : I specified distinctly what I meant. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman knows the public opinion that has been brought to bear by the Primrose dames on Radical opinion in England. I also mentioned the circumstances of the Wesleyan minister at Hatfield.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: When did the Primrose dames mutilate cattle? When did the Primrose dames fire into houses? When did they drag the tenants out of their houses and place them against the walls and shoot them to death under the cowardly instigation of their advisers? And these men now get up and say that the tenants are under the influence and terrorism of the landlords, whom they denounce as being scarcely fit to live. Fortunately, the landlords are above these threats. After all, it is not they who have suffered most; it is the poor tenants, men of their own class, who have been shot down and brutally murdered. You dare not touch the landlords, and therefore it is that we desire to give them the real veto in order to enable them to protect their new tenants. That is the first thing that we say. The hon. Member said in the course of the Debate that this Parliament had never done anything; that at this late day the Government are trying to do something for them, but that little is obtained except under the pressure of disturbance in Ireland. I am afraid to some extent that is true; but let it not be true any longer. The hon. Member said two things, to both of which attention ought to be given. In the first place, this Parliament had acted too late. It is true. Let us act in time. Let us act when we are convinced of the justice of the cause. Let us act upon the merits of the case and without regard to threats of oppression. In the second place, he said that we only acted after pressure. The lesson we have to learn is never let us act under pressure again, because the only result is to give encouragement to Members like the hon. Member for Cork to go on in their illegal proceedings, to raise conspiracies, and to extort from our fears what they have never claimed from our sense of justice. If it be true that justice demands this Bill, let us vote for it, but do not let us vote for it because of the threats of hon. Members opposite; let us see whether, even by a course of 20 years of resolute government, we cannot teach Irishmen to respect the law. I say let us judge this thing by its merits and on its merits. I have admitted there was a case made out for some of those tenants which might have been met, and if it has not been met the fault is the fault of hon. Members opposite and of the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench. It is not our fault. For our part, we have made our offer, and it has not been accepted; and I would rather not accept any compromise or any Bill than give once more an encouragement to violence, agitation, and dishonesty in Ireland.

[At this point Mr. Dillon and Mr. A. J. Balfour rose together for the purpose of continuing the discussion.]

Mr. DILLON: Sir——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Sir——[*Loud cries of* "Dillon!" from the Irish Benches.]

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Two speeches on the same side.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! that is a disgraceful expression. I will state to the House exactly what has happened. There is now only an hour left, and it is reasonable that the Leader of the Opposition should speak, to be followed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and if those two right hon. Gentlemen speak it would be impossible for any other Member to intervene, from lack of time. [*Cries of* "Adjourn!"] I am sure no one in the House wishes it more than myself. I can assure the House that is the only motive I had in calling on the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. DILLON: May I make a personal appeal to the right hon. Gentleman. I do think that, in view of the great interest which has been aroused in the House by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, totally unexpected as it was, throwing charges across the floor of the House which touch our constituents, it is hard if no Member of the Irish Party is permitted to reply. I would be the last person in the House to suppose that you were actuated by any motives other than those of scrupulous firmness. I have experienced too much personal kindness than to suppose otherwise, but I would appeal to you and to the Leader of the Opposition to allow some Member of the

Irish Party to answer the speech of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is impossible for me to ignore the appeal of the hon. Member; but he must see that we have a right to speak in this Debate. I am perfectly indifferent whether the hon. Member occupies the half-hour that remains or whether the Chief Secretary occupies it; but to allow the hon. Member and the Chief Secretary to divide the hour between them is asking more than I am inclined to concede. I should, of course, greatly prefer to follow an opponent than a friend, but it ought hardly to be expected that I should give up my right to speak before this Debate closes.

Mr. DILLON: I should be sorry to ask the right hon. Gentleman to give up his right to speak; but I think the speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite has created a new situation, and it is sufficiently important to have the Debate carried over until to-morrow, so that some arrangement can be made by which the voice of Ireland might be heard on a matter of vital interest to Irishmen. I would respectfully ask the Government to consent to adjourn the Debate either until to-morrow, or, better still, until Thursday night, so that the Leader of the Opposition should have an opportunity to reply.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: The hon. Member can speak next, and the Leader of the Opposition afterwards.

Mr. DILLON: I would not take advantage of your kindness without stating that the subject is too grave for three speeches to be compressed into the space of an hour. I appeal to all hon. Members who consider the great gravity of interests we have at stake not to close the door of this important discussion until we clearly understand each other's minds, and until we see whether there are not some means of coming to an agreement. I again appeal to the Leader of the House to grant us an adjournment until Thursday, when it would be perfectly easy to close the Debate at the commencement of the proceedings.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: I strongly appeal to the Leader of the House to accept the suggestion made by my hon. Friend. It is wholly impossible that this Debate can be finished without an adjournment.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Not Thursday.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: It is impossible that the Debate can be concluded by 12 o'clock to-night. We ought to have fair time to reply to the charges brought against us by the right hon. Gentleman in the speech he has just delivered.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: May I ask you, Sir, whether it would not be possible to continue the Debate to-night for an hour beyond 12 o'clock?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: As 12 o'clock is the ordinary time for the termination of our proceedings I hardly like to take upon myself to say that we can set aside the Standing Order in the manner suggested.

Mr. J. MORLEY: The demand of the hon. Member for Mayo comes upon me with surprise; but the circumstances being what they are, and it being evidently quite impossible for the right hon. Gentleman opposite, to say nothing of the hon. Member for Mayo and myself, to exhaust what has to be said, the Government offer no objection to the adjournment of the Debate until to-morrow, but will on no account consent to a prolongation beyond to-morrow.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: By the leave of the House, I may say I think it is most inconvenient that the Debate should go over, and I am perfectly ready to give up my privilege to speak, and I think we may devote the next hour to listening to the hon. Member for Mayo and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Mr. DILLON: I should be very sorry if the Leader of the Opposition adheres to that view, because it would lead one to believe that there is much seriousness in the offer which was thrown out as a challenge to us by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. But when the Chief Secretary for Ireland says my claim to be heard on behalf of the Irish Party comes on him by surprise, my reply is that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham came upon us by surprise, and we were under the impression that the right hon.

Gentleman had decided not to intervene in the Debate. I do not in the least degree complain of his intervention. But although the opening sentences of his speech sounded something like the old times, towards the close of his speech he made some rather remarkable statements, with which I certainly feel that some Member of our Party is bound to deal. There was one sentence in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which I think ought to be fixed in the attention and ought to command the careful consideration of every Member of this House. The right hon. Gentleman said the future of Ireland depends on the Irish people learning the lesson that not by violence and not by crime must they look to achieve their rights through legislation. I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman in that sentiment. It is a sentiment which I myself have frequently expressed in this House. What are the circumstances in which we now find ourselves? By the admission of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham, of the Leader of the Opposition and of all Parties, the people of Ireland for the last two or three years have been peaceful and quiet beyond all previous periods in their history. If the right hon. Gentleman believes that the future of Ireland depends upon teaching the people of Ireland that they will receive consideration and justice in this House when they are quiet and peaceable and law-abiding, and not when they are engaged in violence and agitation, or crime in that country, then I say now is the time and now the opportunity to do them justice when they have been patient, law-abiding, and quiet. The whole course of the policy of this House through generations of long years has been calculated to impress on the mind of every Irish peasant that he could obtain no hope of redress so long as he remained patient and law-abiding, and that it was only by violence and agitation that the grievances of Ireland could obtain any hearing in this Assembly. It is on that ground largely that we base our appeal to the House of Commons to consider this question in a different spirit to that which has been exhibited to-night. Ireland has been peaceable, patient, and law-abiding. Every responsible speaker has admitted that there exists a state of distress and grievance in Ireland which ought to be remedied, and yet we have seen the spirit in which that condition has been approached in this House, and we appear to be on the verge of a fresh and painful step in the history of that unhappy country which will be marked by the rejection of this Bill. If I were so disposed I might enter into a war of recrimination with the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the observations he made on the speech of the hon. Member for Devonport; but, as he said, that is all beside the question. Are we at this hour of the day seriously engaged in discussing the question whether the Irish tenants have had grievances, and the Irish landlords have evicted harshly? That is an idle and futile discussion for this stage of the Bill. What we are engaged in discussing, or what we ought to be engaged in discussing, is whether any remedy can be applied to the said condition of things which exists in Ireland, and which every hon. Member admits exists in that country. What, after all, is the point of difference between the two sides of the House? Both Parties admit that there exists in Ireland a very great social evil which may lead to the gravest possible consequences. One Party say they would be willing to remedy that evil if a voluntary measure were accepted by us, and the Government of the day have introduced a Bill which proposes to remedy the evil by compulsion placed upon the landlord only, and not upon the new tenant, because there is no proposal for any compulsion with regard to the new tenant. Therefore, it now appears that the only point at issue between the two sides in this controversy is whether the Irish Party would accept a voluntary instead of a compulsory Bill, or whether the Government would adopt a voluntary instead of a compulsory Bill? The right hon. Member for West Birmingham stated that he and his Party had offered a voluntary measure for the settlement of this difficulty. Sir, I deny that. No such offer was ever made. The right hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong in stating that we were perfectly well aware such a Bill could be obtained. We have no such knowledge; we never had such knowledge, and allow me to point out this fact: This is a short Bill dealing with a very simple and limited matter, and we were two days in Debate in the Committee on this Bill before the Closure Resolution was proposed which is made a matter of such bitter complaint. A very simple Amendment omitting two lines in the first clause of this Bill would have turned it into a voluntary instead of a compulsory measure, and so far as I recollect no proposal to effect that change was made by any of the right hon. Gentleman's friends during those two days. The fact is, that two whole nights were occupied on the first two lines of this Bill, and we were never allowed to approach the question whether it was to be voluntary or compulsory. I want to know from the right hon. Gentleman himself is that a fair way of treating a question like this, on the solution of which the lives and happiness of a great many people depend? Make no mistake about that—even on the admission of the right hon. Gentleman himself—of a great many people who, even on the admission of the right hon. Gentleman himself, are perfectly innocent. Of course, we must think of the families of these persons. We must also remember the fact that the right hon. Gentleman contends that these people were driven by coercion and intimidation into these conspiracies. Then, if that is true, is he not all the more bound to come to their rescue now if they are unable to protect themselves? Therefore, I say it is not a fair and true description of the present situation for the right hon. Gentleman to charge us with having shown an irreconcilable spirit. What has been our position? The Government were bound, with all the information at their disposal and with a full sense of their responsibility, to bring before this House a measure which, according to the best of their judgment, would heal this trouble and do away with this social difficulty. After full inquiry they came to the conclusion that a voluntary measure would not in many cases effectually deal with the difficulty. I would ask hon. Members to recollect this fact: that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin in his speech admitted that he did not think it rational or logical to bring in a purely voluntary measure, leaving it thereby in the power, as he put it, of a few unreasonable landlords to nullify your measure and make the remedy an ineffectual one. The Government, in bringing in a compulsory measure, took the only course open to them, on their own responsibility, for the peace of Ireland. We likewise hold and believe that it was only from a compulsory measure that we could look for an effectual remedy. We ground that belief on our experience in Ireland in dealing with unreasonable landlords, and also on our experience of the working of Clause 13. It is not true or fair to say that we obstructed in any way the working of Clause 13, and it failed most signally to remedy the condition of things. That was the condition which existed when the Bill was introduced. The Government introduced a measure such as, in their judgment, would apply an effectual remedy to this disease, and I say it does not lie in the mouth of any Member of this House to say that we have refused a voluntary measure until that voluntary measure has been offered in a shape on which a judgment could be founded upon it. For my part, I greatly fear that a voluntary Bill would not lead to a settlement of the existing difficulty, but my view of that question would be largely modified if any declaration were to be made on behalf of the Irish landlords to the effect that they would facilitate a settlement under a voluntary measure. No doubt, if the hon. Member for South Hunts and other gentlemen who direct the action of the landlords in Ireland were to endeavour sincerely to make a voluntary plan work such a plan would work; but as long as those gentlemen maintain an irreconcilable attitude, what rational ground exists for hoping that a voluntary plan would be adequate to meet the necessities of the case? Our attitude, therefore, in respect of the modification of the Bill must necessarily depend largely upon the tone and temper displayed by the landlord party in this Assembly. The House is, I think, making a great and serious mistake in exhibiting so much anxiety to get rid of this Bill. Surely the Opposition are showing a sad and reprehensible disregard of responsibility when, amid jeers and laughter, they endeavour to hustle this Bill out of the House. How can any man hope that the Irish people will be reconciled to this Parliament and will look to it for justice and the recognition of their rights—how can any man entertain such a hope in view of the action of the Opposition in respect of this Bill? But even at the eleventh hour I have not abandoned all hope that some arrangement may be arrived at. The hon. Member for South Tyrone, in a speech showing a strong desire on his part to effect a settlement of this question, declared that both sides in Ireland were tired of the struggle. I agree with the hon. Member. Both sides in Ireland are, I believe, tired of this cruel struggle, which has been the fruitful parents of suffering and misery. It would be worthy of this House if, dismissing old, worn-out charges and recriminations—it being admitted, if you wish, that I am myself a criminal of the darkest dye—and approaching the question simply in the spirit of statesmen, you were to make one supreme effort to solve this great problem. The fortunes of innocent women and children are at stake, and if this Bill is rejected many people, I fear, who never joined the Plan of Campaign, will be condemned to lives of misery and possibly infamy. It is idle to ask us, as the hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of the Bill did, whether we will give a pledge of finality. Finality in what? Has not the hon. Gentleman himself admitted in the Committee Room upstairs that there must be an Irish Land Bill next year? There cannot be finality on the question of Irish Land Laws, I am afraid, for some years to come. What there can be finality in—and this is a deep-seated conviction in my mind—is this: There can be finality in outrage and crime and class hatred in Ireland, and this you can effect by passing this healing measure of justice. What is the use of talking about the good effects of 20 years "firm government" in Ireland? We have had 90 years of firm government in that country. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham asked whether all our exertions are to go for nothing, and whether agitation is to go on after the Land Acts which have been passed. Nobody knows better than the right hon. Gentleman himself that those Land Acts have brought benefit to Ireland, that the bloody record of the past has been largely effaced and wiped out by the measures of justice which have been passed by the House. We can obtain no finality in human affairs. We cannot promise finality. But what I and my friends can, and do, now promise is that if the hand of reconciliation is held out to us, and if the Opposition show any generosity towards these poor people, we Irish Members on our part will meet them half-way, and will do our best to secure that the future course of reform in Ireland may be a peaceable course, and may be carried on by no other weapons than those used in this peaceful country.

MR. J. MORLEY: Mr. Speaker, I greatly regret that the House has not had the advantage of hearing the observations which the right hon. Gentleman opposite was expected to make on this Bill. No one more sincerely regrets it than I do, but I hope he will feel that it is proper for me, as the Minister in charge of this Bill, to make some observations. When the Debate opened to-night my hon. Friend the Member for the Guildford Division of Surrey, who knows a great deal about Irish affairs, said, and said truly, that this Debate and this Bill marked a critical position in Irish affairs. He says that this Bill and this discussion mark—and he used very emphatic language—a turning point in the Irish Land Question. The hon. Member said that there were three matters which he invited me to bring my mind to and to deal with—first, purchase; second, the question of evicted tenants; and thirdly, that new Land Act—the Amendment of the various Land Acts—which he contemplates as an inevitable necessity. My hon. Friend must know that, in spite of the turn that it was attempted to give to an observation of mine as to my attitude towards the Irish landlords—he must know, from the line I took in 1886, that the Irish landlords have not had in me an irreconcilable foe. The hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin, in his speech to-night, said the Irish landlords had carried it a little too far, and he said they had no warmer friend than I. I do not accept that——

MR. HARRINGTON: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I did not say anything at all of the kind. I said the landlords of Ireland could not desire to have a warmer friend in Office, because if they had their political supporters in Office their political supporters would be able to bring pressure to bear upon them, which the right hon. Gentleman is not bringing, and apparently has no intention of bringing.

MR. J. MORLEY: The whole point of the hon. and learned Gentleman's argument was that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach) was a far harder foe of the Irish landlords than I am. [Mr. HARRINGTON: Hear, hear!] Well, I disclaim that compliment. At the same time, I think that remark was enough to have shown the hon. Member for Guildford that I have, at least, not shown a disposition to press the law against the Irish landlords, nor in the discussions upstairs or anywhere else have I even exhibited a desire to treat Irish landlords differently from any other citizens of this realm. Let us suppose that my hon. Friend is right, and that we are entering on a new chapter of agrarian legislation. I put it to him, and I put it to other gentlemen above the Gangway, whether there could be a more unfortunate way of turning over that new leaf than the spirit which has, in so many parts of this discussion, been shown by those who have taken upon themselves to speak for the Irish landlords? My hon. Friend who moved the rejection of the Bill said that there was a general desire for an accommodation, and my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham declared that the same wish was present in his mind as that which was present in the minds of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, and of others who sit around them. What practical and effective evidence have we had of this desire for an accommodation? Has one single proposal been made—has one single proposal been laid before this House which the Government could have taken up, could have considered, and could have acted upon?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes; the Amendments which we were not allowed to discuss.

MR. J. MORLEY: My right hon. Friend refers to the Amendments, and he said in the course of his remarks that it was our resort to the Closure which had prevented that accommodation. Let us look at that for a moment. We were in Committee for two days on this Bill. In those two days 21 Amendments were disposed of—seven were disposed of by the Chairman's decision that they were out of Order, and we disposed of 14 effective Amendments. The Amendments left on the Paper were 350, and in whose names did those 350 Amendments stand? One stood in the name of a British Liberal, 26 in the names of Irish Nationalists, 119 in the names of Irish Unionists, and 186 in the names of British Unionists who have no special interest in Irish questions. [*Cheers, and Opposition cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Why not?"] Yes, I said gentlemen from England like the hon. Member for Preston, who had no special interest in Irish questions. Now, does my right hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham mean that conciliation has been prevented because we did not give time for the discussion of those 186 Amendments which were set down by British Members of Parliament?

MR. J. CHAMBEBLAIN: No, Sir; as my right hon. Friend has referred to me, I did not mean that by my interruption. What I did mean is that a number of Amendments put down in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone would have transformed the Bill into a voluntary Bill. We were not allowed to discuss them; but it was open to the Government if they approved of them to have introduced them themselves, even if we were away.

MR. J. MORLEY: It is quite true that the hon. Member for Tyrone had put down a scheme of Amendments. But what was the object of it? It was to transform the Bill from a compulsory into a voluntary Bill; and, secondly, which is much more important, to transform it from a reinstatement scheme into a purchase scheme. The hon. Member for Dover had a precisely similar scheme on the Paper, and he said, "If you had given us four hours you could have discussed the whole of my proposal."

MR. WYNDHAM: No; I said you would have reached that point in the Bill.

MR. J. MORLEY: Yes; but when my right hon. Friend the Member for

West Birmingham says there was no time for the discussion of these Amendments of the hon. Member for Dover and the hon. Member for South Tyrone he forgets that there were 35 hours left in which that scheme, which undoubtedly was the most important alternative to the Government proposal, could have been amply discussed. But my right hon. Friend and right hon. Gentlemen opposite thought for some reason, I know not what, that they could more usefully contribute to the passage of or to the amendment of this Bill or to the getting a fair hearing for alternate schemes, by what? By one of the most foolish, puerile manœuvres. It is quite true that Mr. Burke, Mr. Fox—great men—seceded, but these great men seceded for great objects. They seceded because they would have nothing to do with a policy they thought mistaken, but which, at all events, was a great policy, but they did not secede in a sulk because they would have only 35 hours instead of 45 hours in which to discuss a Bill. No, I hold to my description of that manœuvre, and I repeat it was one of the most puerile manœuvres ever heard of. My right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham talked about justice to the new tenants, and said, "We are not such cowards as to leave these new tenants to their fate." I maintain that I am just as much entitled as my right hon. Friend to disclaim cowardice, because, in spite of representations, I said these men should not be put out against their will. As to the proposal to turn the Bill into a voluntary measure, when I assumed a post of responsibility in the administration of Ireland two years ago I found that Section 13 had completely failed. I hope the House will not think me egotistical, but this has an important bearing on the question. So far as my inquiry went it failed, not because agitators induced Irish tenants not to avail themselves of its provisions, but because there was not time enough given and because voluntary purchase alone could not and cannot settle this question. I set to work and underwent a considerable amount of obloquy in this House and elsewhere for appointing a Commission to inquire into these facts which were forced upon me by social and administrative difficulties in the country. From that day down to this I have made the starting point of the evicted tenant policy to get, if possible, the goodwill of the landlords. It has been my aim and object to get the landlords to assent to some kind of plan which should reinstate these evicted tenants, or restore them, in some shape or other, and by voluntary means, if possible, to their holdings. Of course, any man would prefer a voluntary Bill if he persuaded himself that it would work, but if I had brought in a voluntary Bill everything that has happened has convinced me that the Bill would not have achieved the objects we all have at heart. All depends on whether the landlords would work the Bill. What reason had I for thinking they would consent to work a voluntary Bill? First of all, the Landlords' Convention, as soon as the Second Reading of the Bill approached, passed a series of hostile and strongly-worded resolutions with the words "iniquitous," "immoral," "unjust," and so forth. Secondly, I have heard the speech of the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry), every word of which was one of antagonism to anything like a voluntary Bill; indeed, he went so far as to say that if I wanted to settle the evicted tenants question I had nothing to do but to get up and say that the Government would not stir one hair's breadth in the matter.

MR. SMITH-BARRY: What I said was that it was settling itself.

MR. J. MORLEY: Quite true, but that was *non possumus*. No one from any quarter of the House has said that the evicted tenants question was settling itself, or would settle itself, and the hon. Member for Guildford, who has moved the rejection of the Bill, himself admits, as he knows, that *non possumus* will not settle it or carry it any way towards a settlement. A third factor which has made me feel very doubtful about the success of a voluntary scheme was the preference for the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh and the throwing over of the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Tyrone. I really ask the House to consider what chance a Minister could conceive himself of having a voluntary system work when the gentlemen on whose goodwill the working of it depended took up such a line as I have indicated, and which showed itself in the three symptoms or signs I have referred to. There was an Amendment standing in the name of the hon. and learned Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division of Dublin—which he did not move—to this effect, that at a certain stage of the Bill—namely, the operation of the Bill, the landlord's consent should be necessary. What was that stage? The first proceeding is the petition, the second the conditional order by the Arbitrators, the third is the hearing of the parties in case the landlord objects, and the fourth is the order being made absolute. The hon. and learned Member for the St. Stephen's Green Division proposed that after petition, after the conditional order, after the hearing of the parties by the Arbitrators, and before the order was made absolute, the landlord's consent should be an indispensable precedent condition.

MR. W. KENNY: One of my earliest Amendments was that the petition presented by the petitioner should be with the consent of the landlord.

MR. J. MORLEY: That is an Amendment, of course, we could never have assented to. But the other Amendment interposing the landlord's consent at that stage which I have indicated, just before the blow fell, raised a point which might have been worthy of consideration. But it has not been mentioned in this night's Debate. In spite of all the talk of accommodation from that quarter of the House, in spite of the appeal made to the House in the noble and memorable speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin, which I venture to say—whatever may be thought of its purport—nobody who heard it will ever forget; in spite of that no proposal of any kind, no indication, has been thrown out to us that either that or any other proposal would be accepted as a final settlement of the difficulty dealt with by the Bill. On the contrary, it cannot be forgotten that the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh, who moved the rejection of the Bill on the Second Reading, used most violent language, which precluded any kind of hope of accommodation or compromise. What did he say? He said, "You are going, out of the Church Fund, to reward the conspirators," or some such words, "and pay them the wages of iniquity." Was that the spirit of accommodation? What is much more important, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, in his speech, used words almost as unqualified. There was not one single syllable in that speech which seemed to open any door whatever for accommodation or for making the Bill workable in the opinion of gentlemen opposite.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was waiting for Committee.

MR. J. MORLEY: His language did not indicate that he was waiting for the Committee stage at all. He was in a position—and the cheers of the hon. Member for South Hunts showed the same thing—of absolute *non possumus*, and from that position I do not know whether he has or has not departed. That is one of the reasons why I deplore we have not had the benefit of hearing him to-night, for I should have listened with a most eager curiosity to know whether he held out any hope of accommodation such as I have indicated. But, Sir, a very preposterous demand has been made on us. We are asked not only to assent to the change which I have described, but we are asked to give an unqualified assurance and declaration that after the Bill is made voluntary we shall never again upon any account, whatever may be done in Ireland, raise this question and bring forward any other proposal. If that is what is called accommodation or compromise, I repudiate it. I should not have brought in this Bill unless I had been persuaded that this matter was and is a social and administrative necessity. The hon. Member for East Mayo has assured the House that, so far as he and his friends are concerned, he will be willing, if a declaration were made by such a gentleman as the hon. Member for South Hunts, to assent to some compromise of the narrow, the restricted, and the strictly defined kind which I have just described to the House. As to the purchase scheme, which we are charged so heavily with neglecting, I will say that there is not one single transaction which can take place under this Bill which cannot be turned, at the sole option of the landlord, into a sale. It depends entirely upon the Irish landlords whether this is a purchase scheme from the very beginning. We had too much reason to apprehend that this Bill would not be dealt with argumentatively, because we were told from the first by the hon. and gallant Member who moved the rejection of the Bill upon the Second Reading that whatever we did here the Bill would be thrown out in another place. The hon. and gallant Gentleman to-night has rather denied that he said that.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON: I did not deny using the words. I said those words meant the opinion I expressed as to what would be the result when the Bill reached another place.

MR. J. MORLEY: The hon. and gallant Gentleman said, "If the Bill ever becomes law, which it will not," and then some hon. Gentleman called out "Why not?" and the hon. and gallant Gentleman rejoined, "Because it would be thrown out in the other House." The hon. and gallant Member made a prophecy more or less upon the merits or demerits of the Bill. He prophesied that the demerits were such that the wisdom of another place would not be able to brook or tolerate such a proposal. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition went much further, because he argued that if this House discussed the Bill in a certain way the noble Lords in another place would throw out the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If this House does not discuss it.

MR. J. MORLEY: The right hon. Gentleman's actual words were these—

> "It is my opinion that by proceedings of this kind you make it absolutely certain and inevitable what fate is to await the Bill."

And then, by way of a supplemental explanation, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "What I said was this—that the course this House has pursued in connection with this Resolution, and has pursued on previous occasions when the Lords have sent down Bills with Amendmemts, made it hardly open to doubt that they would be driven to reject this Bill."

That is a very serious prophecy. It means that in another place they are to revise and regulate the Rules under which we choose to conduct our business, and if we do not conduct our business in a manner which will meet with their approval that then our Bills will be thrown out. They did not act upon that principle in connection with the Crimes Act. It comes, therefore, to this—that any bad Bill, as we think it, so bad that it is obstructed here or resisted here, and you are driven then to one of those large Closures by this resistance, that that Bill is perfectly safe in another place in spite of the method by which it was passed. But if a Liberal Administration or the majority of the House, at the time, have what they think a good Bill, then if it be obstructed—if you insist on my using that word—from that (the Opposition) quarter, that is to be a reason why the Bill should be thrown out by the House of Lords. Gentlemen who have spoken from Ireland have referred to the quiet which now prevails in that country. It is undeniable that there is a greater and more profound tranquillity in Ireland than has prevailed for 20 years. When I took Office and felt it my duty to revoke the proclamations bringing the Crimes Act into force all sorts of prophecies were indulged in, and it was said I should soon repent what I had done. The result has completely justified my forecast and completely falsified the forecast of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I think I have a right to ask whether some credence ought not to be attached to my forecast now? I wish to say, and I do so with a full sense of responsibility for what I am saying, that I think the rejection of this Bill will make the maintenance of the present tranquillity in Ireland very much more difficult than it now is. For my part I do not fear the responsibility of facing whatever may happen, but I do entreat this House, and I entreat all those in another place who may know of what I am saying, not to make these wretched Irish tenants the pawns in your Party game. The question, after all, is to be decided in the House where there is no direct chosen Representative of Irish nationalism; in the House where all the mischief has been done in dealing with previous remedial legislative efforts for Ireland, and the country will know, if evil results follow from the rejection of this Bill, where the shame and the crime rest.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 199; Noes 167.—(Division List, No. 213.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (*re-committed*) BILL.—(No. 321.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 30th July.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Question proposed, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

MR. BARTLEY said, he thought it should be known that this Bill contained 748 Clauses and 22 Schedules, and that it was embodied in 368 pages. It was true it had been considered by a Joint Committee of the two Houses, but that body only sat six times, and one-and-a-half hours on each occasion—giving nine hours in all. It not only consolidated but it considerably altered the law affecting our Merchant Navy. It dealt also with the arrangements concerning lighthouses, the wages and health of our seamen, wrecks, salvage, and pilotage, and with other matters. Surely, then, it was a strong order to ask the House to consider such a Bill at a quarter past 12 at night, especially as the 368 pages could only have been scampered through by the Committee. The Government were willing to devote days to such Bills as the Welsh Church Disestablishment and the Registration, but here was a Bill which concerned property worth scores of millions and an enormous number of people, and they proposed only to give a few minutes to the consideration of it. He did not want to stop the Bill, but he did wish the country to understand how these things were done, and how measures affecting that great national interest, the Mercantile Marine, were dealt with.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) said, he was glad his hon. Friend did not wish to prevent the Bill passing, and he would express his own sincere hope that it would be passed. He would like to give the House a brief history of the measure. When he was at the Board of Trade he gave directions to the draftsman to draw up a Bill to consolidate the Merchant Shipping Laws, which everybody who had at all studied the subject knew to be most urgently required. Some progress was made with the Bill, and it was completed when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Brightside Division of Sheffield came into power. It was duly introduced, and copies were circulated among the Local Marine Boards and various Chambers of Shipping. Then it was considered last Session by a Committee of the House of Lords, and certain Amendments were found to be necessary. He did not believe that it contained any alteration of the law of the slightest importance; it was a pure consolidation Bill; it had been considered by a Joint Committee of both Houses—a very competent body to deal with it——

MR. BARTLEY: I did not say it was not. I only said the Committee sat but for nine hours.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said, the Committee did its work completely and thoroughly, and he was convinced that the House might safely accept its decision.

MR. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he would like to minimise as far as possible the effect of the speech of the hon. Member for Islington. It would be nearer the mark to say that the Committee sat for nine months than nine hours. The Bill was considered for some time last Session, and the shipowners themselves had spent very large sums of money in employing draftsmen and lawyers to check every line of it, and to take care that it did not change the law. It was neither more nor less than a Consolidation Bill, and when passed it would really constitute a Merchant Shipping Code. An enormous amount of money, time, and labour had been expended on it, and he hoped it would now be allowed to pass.

MR. RICHARDSON (Durham, S.E.), on behalf of the General Shipowners' Society, expressed approval of the Bill.

MR. BUCKNILL (Surrey, Epsom) said, he knew something of the history and objects of the Bill. He had no desire to prevent its being proceeded with. While he was anxious to see the law codified, he did not desire to see it changed in the way in which this measure altered it. The first Bill introduced—he cared not by whom—contained 106 notes pointing out the alterations of the law contemplated in the Bill, and the present one contained some of those alterations. For instance, Section 101 of the Act of 1854 laid it down that the alteration of certain documents should be deemed to be a forgery.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Is it in Order to go into these matters?

MR. BUCKNILL said, he only wished to show that the Bill did alter the law; because the 67th clause added the builders' certificate to the list of the documents contained in Section 101 of the 1854 Act. He did not say that this alteration was not a proper one to make. He was not complaining of it, but he must not be taken as assenting to the statement that the Bill did not alter the law. If, however, the House chose to pass the Bill he would make no further objection.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL thought it was not reasonable to ask them to pass a Bill of that magnitude after midnight. The mere mechanical work would occupy till after 1 o'clock. Seeing that the Government had ruthlessly taken all the time of private Members, he would suggest that the Bill should be put down as the first Order on Wednesday. He must now move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that in the days when the Irish Party were most bitterly opposed to the Government they never objected to Consolidation or Statute Law Revision Bills. This was the first time he had known a Consolidation Bill objected to.

SIR E. CLARKE (Plymouth) said, he would make a strong appeal that the Motion should not be pressed. This was not a question of considering a Bill containing 748 clauses, but it was a question of maintaining the system established by the Conservative Party with regard to Bills of this class. It had been the custom of the House to accept these Consolidation Bills on the authority of the Committee, and it was perfectly hopeless to think of passing such Bills if the House were to attempt to discuss the clauses. It was of extreme importance that the Merchant Shipping Acts should be consolidated, and inasmuch as this Bill had been examined with the greatest care, he hoped the House would accept it on the authority of the Committee.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: All this is quite true, but the Bill could just as easily be taken to-morrow at 12 o'clock.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, he, too, would appeal to the hon. Member not to press his Motion as there was a general desire that the Bill should go through. He was sure the hon. Member would not wish the interests of seamen and shipowners to suffer by any further delay.

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Ormskirk) said, he, too, would appeal to the hon. Member on behalf of the shipowners. The matter was of considerable moment to a very great industry.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) also hoped the hon. Gentleman would be good enough to allow the Bill to go through.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.

(No. 336.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH asked the object of the Bill.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, the object was to rectify a small error in the existing law. The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, gave power to a Local Authority to borrow money for the purpose of buying land on which to erect houses, but did not give authority to raise loans for the purpose of erecting the buildings. It was, however, imagined that that power already existed, and Orders had been passed by the Local Government Board embodying it. But doubts had now arisen as to the legality of this, and this Bill was proposed in order to set them at rest. It was, of course, in strict accord with the policy of the Act.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I do not think the Bill should go on in the absence of the hon. Member for the West Derby Division of Liverpool.

Second Reading deferred till Thursday.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS [*changed from* "CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)"]—(*re-committed*) BILL.—(No. 260.)

COMMITTEE.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) asked whether the Government could arrange to take this Bill at a time when it could be discussed, as there were one or two Amendments which he desired to move. He wished also to know whether the President of the Board of Agriculture would arrange to let Members have, before the Committee stage was taken, the Report of the Special Committee appointed some time ago to inquire into the case of certain Canadian animals landed in this country.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. T. E. ELLIS, Merionethshire) said, he would confer with the Leader of the House as to the replies to be given to the right hon. Gentleman's questions.

Committee deferred till Thursday.

LOCOMOTIVE THRESHING ENGINES BILL.—(No. 292.)

Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (ACCOMMODATION).

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, and an Appendix, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 268.]

Mr. Shaw-Lefevre

TRUSTS ADMINISTRATION [INQUIRY NOT COMPLETED].

Report from the Select Committee, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 269.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 269.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Nautical Assessors (Scotland) Bill.

Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill.

Amendments to—

Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [*Lords*].

Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Barry, &c.) Bill [*Lords*].

VALUATION OF LANDS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*]. (No. 345.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

CONVENTION OF ROYAL BURGHS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 339.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

JURIES (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Ross, Bill to amend the Juries (Ireland) Acts, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Ross, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. T. W. Russell, Mr. T. M. Healy, and Mr. Dane.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 350.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [EXPENSES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Local Government Board for Scotland in the execution of their duties, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session, to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 8th August 1894.

MOTION.

GREAT WESTERN AND MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL [*Lords*].

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Standing Order 213 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

(Queen's *Consent* on behalf of the Crown to be signified.)

*Sir A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he did not propose to oppose the Third Reading of this Bill; but on behalf of his right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean, the cause of whose absence would be regretted by the House, he was desired by him to make the strongest protest against the course which had been adopted in reference to the Bill. The Bill effected a combination of three powerful Railway Companies; it enacted rates in excess of those of the existing Company; and it did not accept even the rates of the Midland Railway, which, in the circumstances, might be taken to be reasonable; while, according to the view of a large body of traders, it was calculated to embarrass the trade of the district. These powerful Companies were in combination, he was afraid, to some extent with the large coalowners, to the great prejudice of small traders. On the Second Reading stage the President of the Board of Trade stated, as he understood, that unless some satisfactory arrangement was made in Committee he might feel it his duty to protect the trade of the district by opposing the Bill on the Third Reading, which it was now almost impossible for himself to do alone. He had himself gone carefully over the papers, and could find no trace of compromise or concession on the part of the promoters to the small traders of the district, nor any indication in the Bill of those other arrangements which he understood were conceded by way of compromise on behalf of the promoters. The only thing he saw was a concession of facilities to the London and North Western Railway, which, he feared, would itself be an operation disadvantageous to the trade generally. However, he did not see the President of the Board of Trade in his place, and without the support of the Department at this stage it would be useless to do otherwise than make a protest. At the same time, on behalf of the traders of the district and of his right hon. Friend as its Representative, he expressly reserved the right, should the arrangements now made not work satisfactorily, to take the sense of the House upon the subject at the earliest opportunity, and to make this railway combination agreement not inconsistent with the prosperity of the trade of the district.

Sir D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) said, he concurred in the remarks of his hon. Friend opposite. He did not know what course was open to them now except to make a protest; but he imagined, in the absence of the President of the Board of Trade, it would be useless to discuss the question at any length now.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 124.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 6th August.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 26, after the word "district," to insert the words—

> "Provided always that, unless the sanitary rates in a sanitary district shall on the average of the last three years have exceeded or fallen short of the average sanitary rate (hereinafter defined) by at least sixpence in the pound, such district and the parishes therein shall not be liable to contribute, or entitled to receive, any sum to or from the Equalisation Fund for the year."—(*Sir J. Lubbock.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) said that, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London, he had been asked to take up this Amendment, which he the more readily did because it was an improvement on the one he himself moved on Monday. He showed on Monday, by figures which were not contested by the Minister in charge of the Bill, that instead of creating equalities it created inequalities. It was objected by the Minister that his proposal would tend to create extravagance among the different parishes—that the parish which knew that it was going to receive would, for the purpose of entitling it to receive under the proviso, take care that its expenditure reached the full average of the expenditure of the Metropolis, and something above it. He had answered that, and need not go into it again, except to say that they proposed to meet it by control. They had put down a subsequent Amendment to meet that case, and he would be interested to know what answer the Minister would be able to give to the Amendment with the additional safeguard introduced. The proposal was that before a parish was entitled to receive anything it should show that it was already rated not only to the average, but 6d. above it, and that before a parish could be made to contribute it should be shown not that it was ¼d. below, but 6d. below. The effect of this would not be in any way to destroy the principle of the Bill. He pointed out on Monday that among the parishes which were nearest to the average—assuming the average rate for the Metropolis to be 5s. 3d., and taking the rates between 5s. and 5s. 7d.—there were 28 parishes between those rates, some of which paid and some received, though at present equal, and would thus be diverged. The whole of those 28 new anomalies would be removed by this Amendment, because the whole of the rates between 5s. and 5s. 7d. were within the 6d. above and the 6d. below limit. By this Amendment they created a neutral ground of 1s.—6d. above the average and 6d. below it. In addition to preventing 28 divergences there would be a further advantage from substituting an average of 5s. 3d. Take the figures above 5s. 9d. The effect of the Amendment would be to remove a great many of the difficulties which the Bill created above those rates. Although it was quite true that the parishes above 5s. 8d. would receive, they received in the most extraordinary, incongruous, and most unequal rates. He had taken the trouble to ascertain the rates of 37 parishes which were above 5s. 7d., and all of which as the Bill stood would receive a portion of the distribution from the Equalisation Fund. What did he find? That every one of these parishes that was now equal with others had a disparity created between it and every other one with which it was at present equal. So much was this so that if the Minister had endeavoured to find a plan by which to create the largest number of divergences among the parishes which were now equal he could not have hit upon a better one than this. He would quote but a few instances. Wandsworth, being rated at 5s. 10d., would receive ¾d., whilst another parish which paid 6s. 2d., or 4d. more, would receive 9d. back. Therefore, instead of the scheme approximating, the divergences and anomalies would be increased, and instead of Wandsworth being below the other parish, Bethnal Green, it would be 4d. or 5d. above it. That, at all events, could not be said to be equalisation. Take another case, that of Camberwell, which was at present one of four parishes that paid 6s. Of these four parishes that were now equal, one of them paid 1·12d., two others about ¾d., and the fourth received 4¾d. The latter was Camberwell, and although it now paid the same amount as the other parishes it got five times as much. But when he came to contrast that with Tooting Graveney, which at present paid a great deal more than 6s., what did he find? Tooting Graveney now paid 6s. 6d. and received 1d.; Camberwell, which paid 6s., received 5d., which would reduce it to 5s. 7d., so that the divergency between these two parishes was largely increased. There were many other anomalies. The effect of the Amendment would be to prevent these inequalities arising, and it would certainly reach much nearer equalisation than the Bill could pretend to do.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, the hon. Member commenced by saying that this Amendment was almost identical with one moved a few days ago, and which was then negatived after a long discussion.

Mr. KIMBER: It was not negatived, but withdrawn. I withdrew it for the purpose of supporting this one.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, then he apologised. He thought it was negatived, and it ought to have been. The hon. Member made a long speech on that occasion, which he had repeated to-day, and the least he could have done was to have spared them a repetition of that speech. The hon. Gentleman had scarcely observed the real effect of this Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of London had an Amendment down on the Paper fixing the average of the rates for the next two years at 5s. 3d. That was to be taken in connection with this Amendment, and the result of the two together would be that there would be only two parishes which would contribute at all—namely, St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. James's, Westminster. These two parishes alone would be in the position in which they would have to contribute in the event of the Amendments being carried. It was so ingeniously framed that the City of London would contribute absolutely nothing, the average by the Amendment being 5s. 3d. and the average rate for the City of London 4s. 10d. He did not think that was a form of Bill which, after all the discussions that had taken place, the Committee would be at all prepared to accept. Again, the acceptance of the Amendment would be to give direct encouragement to extravagance. His main objection, however, was that the Amendment would render the Bill futile, as the result would be that only two parishes would contribute, and the City of London would contribute nothing.

Mr. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, that when the right hon. Gentleman stated that this would be the result of the Amendment now before the Committee, taken in conjunction with one which was to be moved by-and-by, it showed that the right hon. Gentleman had not carefully read the present Amendment. The answer of the President of the Local Government Board had no reference whatever to the Amendment now under discussion. That Amendment provided

> "that unless the sanitary rates in a sanitary district shall on the average of the last three years have exceeded or fallen short of the average sanitary rate (hereinafter defined) by at least 6d. in the £1, such district and the parishes therein shall not be liable to contribute, or entitled to receive, any sum to or from the Equalisation Fund for the year."

The right hon. Gentleman said that that must be taken in connection with an Amendment which did not speak of the sanitary rate at all, but of the general rate. The general rate of London was 5s. 3d., and the right hon. Gentleman argued upon a general rate of 5s. 3d., whereas they had not got that before them at all. The question under discussion had reference to the sanitary rate; therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would see that his vivacious conclusion that only two parishes would contribute did not follow from the argument he had given them as to the general rate. This Amendment dealt with the sanitary rate only; and if the right hon. Gentleman had got any figures to show what the sanitary rate was, they were perfectly entitled to ask for them. At all events, the right hon. Gentleman would see that he (Mr. Goschen) was correct in refusing to accept the argument which the right hon. Gentleman had made, and which dealt with the rates as a whole, whereas the Amendment dealt exclusively with the sanitary rate.

The CHAIRMAN: If that is so, and I think it is so in looking at the further Amendment, I would point out that there is no definition to satisfy the words "hereinafter defined" in this particular Amendment.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Then we may omit the words "hereinafter defined." These words are not necessary at all, because it would be perfectly easy to discover what is the sanitary rate. At all events, it is open to argument.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): What is the sanitary rate?

Mr. GOSCHEN: It is the sanitary rate in the sanitary district. The question will arise how far you can amend the Amendment. It would be perfectly possible for us to define the sanitary rate, and then the average of the last three years is an expression which is perfectly conclusive.

THE CHAIRMAN : I understand the right hon. Gentleman proposes to leave out the words "hereinafter defined."

MR. GOSCHEN : I do.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "hereinafter defined."—(*Mr. Goschen.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the proposed Amendment."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE : The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's is perfectly wrong, and does not appear to have read the Amendment when he says it relates only to the sanitary rates. It does not apply to the sanitary rates. The Amendment says "unless the rates in a sanitary district——"

MR. GOSCHEN : Look at the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman has the wrong Amendment.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE : Oh, yes ; I have taken the Amendment from what it was originally. That, perhaps, may explain the matter. It may be that the Amendment has been altered since our last meeting.

THE CHAIRMAN : It is exactly in the form in which it was moved by the right hon. Member for the University of London.

Amendment to the proposed Amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, put, and negatived.

MR. GOSCHEN formally moved, in page 1, line 27, to leave out Sub-section (5), in order to elicit the views of the right hon. Gentleman upon a point of some importance, and that was why this rate was to be raised as part of the county rate. It appeared to him it would be far better and far more important if the right hon. Gentleman would consider whether this could not be raised as a rate which would figure among the expenditure of the Vestries in the sanitary districts. This being a county rate would not figure in the Local Taxation Returns at all, and they would not be able to individualise it. He did not see why it should be raised as a county rate. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 27, to leave out Sub-section (5.)—(*Mr. Goschen.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (5) stand part of the Clause."

MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, that so far as separation and particularisation and bringing it before the ratepayers were concerned, there would be no rate which would be more clearly brought before them. With respect to the raising of the rates, the County Council had the duty of determining the amount that was to be raised. The County Council raised all its rates through a precept upon the parishes, and if they were going to have this rate raised by the Vestry they would have an extremely difficult series of precepts. There was no precept issued by the County Council to the Sanitary Authority. There was no such thing as a sanitary rate. There was a rate for certain purposes under the Public Health Act of London. He would point out again that there was particular care taken in the Bill that this rate should be individualised. It was to be raised as a separate item of the county rate, and in Clause 2 the Local Government Board was to prescribe such regulations as would particularise the equalisation rate as a separate rate.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE did not think he need add much to what had been stated by the hon. Member for Shoreditch. The object of the proposal was to avoid a second rate by the County Council. This rate would be included in the ordinary precepts which would be directed to the parishes, and this would be far more convenient than if the County Council had to adopt a second form of rate.

MR. GOSCHEN said, his point was that as this expenditure would be under the county rate it would not be included in the Local Taxation Returns, and the individual ratepayer would not therefore be able to trace it. As the County

Council was to determine the manner and state the amount that was to be raised, he did not see why the Local Authorities should not raise the particular rate themselves with their town rates. He thought it was a pity the county rate should be increased for municipal purposes. If, however, the advisers of the right hon. Gentleman, who must know better than he (Mr. Goschen) on a subject of this kind, considered there was a difficulty in carrying out what he had suggested, he considered he had done his duty in calling attention to the matter, and he should not press it further.

*Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.), in supporting the Amendment, said there was one consideration which ought to carry some weight—namely, that the London County Council at the present moment issued its precept for funds of which it was itself charged with the administration. The London County Council did not levy from the various parishes in London one single farthing more than that which they themselves administered. If they were now to include in the London County Council rate a sum of money for the administration of which the County Council would not be responsible they should be departing from the practice which prevailed under the Local Government Act.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) moved in page 2, line 7, after "1891," insert—

"Until every provision of that Act is carried out to the satisfaction of the Local Government Board."

He said that one of the aims that Members on his side of the House had had was to make this Bill specially promote the sanitation of London. He was quite sure that the Government and the London County Council were anxious that the Act of 1891 should be as completely carried out as possible. So far as this Bill tended to alter that condition of things it had his complete sympathy. But the danger was that a great deal of the money would be devoted to the relief of the rates in certain parishes, or that in a few years such relief would simply lead to greater extravagance in other ways, and there would be no security that the provisions of the Public Health Act would be carried out. If his words were introduced into the Bill—though they did not go far enough, for he would prevent any allocation of the money except for sanitation—they would secure that the money was applied in the first place to sanitation, and then, if the Local Government Board were satisfied, to other purposes. He noticed on the Paper an Amendment by the hon. Member for Bethnal Green which tended in the same direction as his. Perhaps that Amendment was "inspired" by the Government, for it only appeared on the Paper that morning; but in any case it showed that the Opposition had at least convinced some of the supporters of the Government of the justice of some of the complaints they made with regard to the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 7, after "1891," to insert the words

"Until every provision of that Act is carried out to the satisfaction of the Local Government Board."—(*Mr. Bartley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the motive of the hon. Gentleman in moving the Amendment, to endeavour to put on the Local Authorities the responsibility of carrying out more fully the provisions of the Public Health Act, had his entire sympathy. But the Amendment would throw on the Local Government Board duties which it would be impossible for the Board to carry out. The Public Health Act consisted of 144 sections relating to a vast number of topics; and if the Amendment were carried, it would be the duty of the Local Government Board to make inquiries in every parish to see whether the provisions of that Act were carried out. The proposal in the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, requiring that a statement should be made by the Local Authorities as to how they had spent the money, was more practical than the Amendment of the hon. Member opposite, and something could be said for it; and he thought that the discussion on the question would be best adjourned until that Amendment came on.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the Opposition felt that they had not laboured in vain in making suggestions for the improvement of the Bill, now that at length they had brought home to the minds of the supporters of the Government, and he hoped the Government themselves, the necessity of availing themselves of this opportunity in order to obtain some more control over the sanitation of London. The Opposition had argued that point from the beginning, and they were very glad that even now, on the third day, the Government had shown a disposition to accept some such suggestion. The Government had got in the Bill the words dealing with the expenditure of the fund by the parishes, "so far as not required for that purpose." What was the meaning of those words? Who was to determine whether the money was not required for that purpose or not?

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the words of the Bill were in legal phraseology, and meant "so far as the money goes," leaving it entirely to the discretion of the Local Authorities to determine the point.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that then the legal interpretation of an Act of Parliament was different from a common sense interpretation of an Act of Parliament. Anyone reading the words would hold that they meant that the Public Health Act of 1891 ought to be carried out in the first instance before the money was spent for any other purpose. He attached infinitely more importance to the carrying out of the Public Health Act of 1891 than to any of the other purposes contemplated by the Bill; and he trusted that before the matter ended—considering that in most parishes the Public Health Act would absorb the whole of the money—the Government would make it clear that the first charge on the money was for purposes of sanitation. He could understand that the duties proposed to be cast on the Local Government Board by the Amendment of his hon. Friend would be too large for the Board; but he thought the Opposition had been justified in their discussions of the Bill by the promise of the Government to adopt some Amendment carrying out to some extent the object they had in view.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said, the Government were anxious to meet the views of the Opposition in every possible way, in order that they might be considered as non-contentious. The Government unfortunately were unable to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite on the question of population; but with regard to sanitation, there had really from the beginning been no difference of opinion between them. The Government had always stated that while they could not say that the whole of this equalisation rate was to be specifically applied to sanitary purposes, one of the primary objects of the Bill was to see to the improved sanitation of those parts of London where such additional expenditure was required. But it was not the intention of the Bill to absolutely earmark this sum of money, and have it specifically applied to sanitation, because he was glad to think that in many parts of London money was not required for such a purpose.

MR. GOSCHEN: Even in the poorer districts?

MR. S. BUXTON said, yes, even in the poorer districts. But in order to meet the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and to show that the object of the Bill was to improve the sanitary condition of London, the Government were prepared to accept some words, such as those standing in the name of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green, which would, to a certain extent, make that purpose clearer than was shown in the Bill as it stood. But there was a distinction between the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green and the Amendment now before the Committee. The latter Amendment was rather too specific with regard to the expenditure of the money solely for sanitation; and, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's had admitted, it would throw too great a responsibility on the Local Government Board. Under the Public Health Act of 1891, the Local Government Board could come down on any district that was lax in attending to the provisions of that Act, and insist on it spending more money for the improvement of its sanitary condition. He hoped that, under the circumstances, the Opposition would accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green as meeting their views as well as the views of the Government.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for North Islington would be satisfied with the intimation given on behalf of the Government, that words would be inserted in the Bill making it clear that it was the primary duty of the Local Authorities to spend this money in carrying out the onerous responsibilities cast on them with regard to sanitation by the London Public Health Act of 1891. His only criticism to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green was that it had a tendency towards centralisation. But perhaps in so important a matter as sanitation it was desirable that some Central Authority should see that the Local Authorities carried out the objects in view, and for which the contributions were to be made from the Equalisation Fund.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) said, his Amendment did not propose to give to the Local Government Board any power it did not already possess; but it gave the Board a more effectual remedy. He should like to say that it was not true that his Amendment was in any way the result of the discussions in Committee. When he made some observations to the Committee, a few days ago, he indicated this very Amendment, and he put it on the Paper simply to carry out the intention he then expressed. The only reason why the Amendment did not appear sooner was because it was a matter that required careful consideration, and he had not fixed on the actual words.

MR. ALBAN GIBBS (London) said, he thought the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green did not go far enough. He hoped the Government would do something more to make the Local Government Board see that this money was devoted to sanitary purposes, and that the sanitary work of the parishes was properly carried out.

MR. BARTLEY said, he was satisfied with the discussion that had taken place on his Amendment, and would withdraw it. He would like to point out that the Government hoped to finish this Bill two days ago, and that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green did not appear on the Paper until actually after the time when it was hoped that the Bill would be through Committee.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 7, to leave out from "1891," to end of Clause, and insert—

"The Local Government Board shall within six months from the passing of this Act, and subsequently at such intervals as they may think fit, ascertain by means of returns to be made to them by the Sanitary Authorities the average expenses properly incurred by a Sanitary Authority under the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and may exercise all powers and do all acts necessary or proper for obtaining such returns."—(*Sir John Lubbock.*)

Question proposed, "That from '1891' down to the word 'purpose' stand part of the Clause."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green would meet the case raised by this Amendment; and he therefore hoped it would be withdrawn.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. WHITMORE (Chelsea) moved, in page 2, line 7, to leave out from "1891," to "provided," in line 10. His Amendment gave the first opportunity of discussing the advisability of including under the functions of the equalisation fund expenses incurred by parishes for the lighting of its streets. It seemed to him that, even if the principle of population might plausibly be applied in deciding the amount of contribution of the different parishes for sanitary expenditure, no one could really say that population afforded a reasonable test of the parish expenditure in respect to the lighting of the streets. Take the parishes of Westminster and the City, for example. They could scarcely contend that the population of the City or of Westminster afforded any kind of indication of the amount spent by those parishes to meet the requirements of the lighting of their streets. Obviously those requirements were controlled partly by the local conditions of the parish and partly by the lighting of London as a whole. Both sides of the House were now in absolute agreement that London should be treated as one whole for sanitary purposes. But when they came to expenditure for lighting the streets he denied absolutely that they ought to treat London as a whole. He denied that it was the maternal concern had to find the money which their own authorities laid out for them. But anyone would see the case was altogether different when they had an equalisation fund, and when instead of a stimulant to economy they had an inducement to extravagance, and he therefore thought it important to cite these instances to the Committee, so that the Committee might see how some parishes were lavish and others economical.

Mr. J. STUART said, the conjectural criticism by which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had endeavoured to throw some light on the sanitary and paving expenditure of the parishes would, he thought, hardly be accepted generally as a just method of inquiry, because it was not possible to say that the amount of streets to be paved and the expense of that paving could depend on the area of the parishes. But he was not now concerned in replying to the criticisms of the hon. Member. He admitted it would be a good thing if, as the result of the discussion, the Local Government Board would take steps to secure more uniformity in the accounts of Metropolitan expenditure, so that it might be possible to discriminate the items of expenditure under different heads of different parishes. They were not so much in the dark as the hon. Member had supposed. There was a Local Government Board Return, and a great deal of illumination might be thrown on the matter if the hon. Member would do what he was sure he would be glad to do when he suggested it to him—that was to say, take the accounts of his own parish as published, and compare them with the appearance they presented when introduced into the Return from the Vestries and District Boards published by the London County Council. He (Mr. J. Stuart) had taken care to look into this in a good many parishes, both before the Bill was introduced and since. Take his own parish of Shoreditch. In the London County Council Returns one item was for maintaining and making streets and roads and for the cleansing and scavenging of them. The two went together in the Return. Dust removal was placed in another portion of the Return. These items, it so happened, in Shoreditch were kept separate, and from the returns of that parish he found that practically two-thirds of the expenditure was for sanitary purposes. In St. Pancras he found it was nearer a half, and if they went through the parishes of London in that way they would not get absolute exactitude. Of the £1,000,000 spent under that account, no doubt the result came out very nearly as the right hon. Gentleman had said—namely, that the sanitary expenditure under the Public Health Act of 1891 came to about a 6d. rate. He made these remarks to show that it would be desirable—not as included in the Bill, but as the result of this discussion—for the Local Government Board to take such steps as were necessary to bring about uniformity in the accounts. No doubt the practice of putting together certain items had arisen because of the fact that the salaries paid were paid in many respects for joint purposes. Then, there were purposes of joint working between which it would be difficult to discriminate. The joint purposes should be set out, and more light should be thrown on the matter. They could not admit the propriety of excluding lighting—which was what had been most referred to—from the operation of the Bill, because the Bill was not one solely for sanitary purposes. It was a Bill for more equalising the rates of London, and for requiring the richer parts of London to contribute towards the rates of the poorer parts for purposes which might be considered common interest. Lighting was certainly a purpose of great common interest if it were for nothing else than the identification and prevention of crime. At the time of the Whitechapel outrages the fact was uniformly brought out in the police inquiries how these crimes were facilitated and their detection hindered by the miserable public street lighting. The rating for lighting alone, moreover, was a source of much inequality. The lighting of St. George's, Hanover Square, was magnificently done at a cost of less than 1d. in the £1, whereas that of Bethnal Green was poorly done with a 2d. rate.

Colonel HUGHES thought that to leave out the words proposed would be an admission that lighting, scavenging, watering, and paving the streets were not a sanitary purpose. He thought they were a very important public purpose, though not under the Public Health Act of 1891. He did not think that the words ought to be left out.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that with reference to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Shoreditch, he should be glad if the result of the discussion were to call special attention to the variations in the statistics and to secure from the Government some method which would enable hon. Members to know where they were. Great trouble was taken by the statisticians of the London County Council to prepare accurate accounts, but they did not necessarily come before Parliament unless one especially asked for a copy of them. A portion of this literature, he confessed, he had never seen until the present occasion. There were no means by which he could know that it existed unless especially informed of it. Therefore, he trusted the Local Government Board would accept the advice given on both sides, and, in communication with the County Council, arrange that further information might be laid before Parliament with regard to the expenditure of Vestries and District Boards and some uniformity observed in the framing of the accounts. Speaking with some experience as a statistician, there was nothing more disheartening to the inquirer or that more precluded the discovery of the truth than to find two sets of figures bearing on the same question, both elaborate, both apparently correct, but which it was impossible for anyone to make agree. Objection was taken to excluding public lighting for the reason that it would exclude a good deal of expenditure which was really sanitary expenditure. He (Mr. Goschen) was not sure to what extent that was the case. The hon. Member, he thought, had carried his point rather farther than he was justified by Act of Parliament, because some of the items he had referred to had come under the Public Health Act, 1891. He agreed that Bethnal Green and Whitechapel were badly lighted, and that it would be desirable that a certain portion of this money should go towards the improvement of lighting in such parishes, but they had no information to guide them in their action in the matter. What he was afraid might be the result was that in the poor parishes the whole of the money might be expended on sanitary purposes, while in the wealthier parishes—which nevertheless, like Islington, would receive—the money would go towards the lighting expenses, because those parishes had already done their duty as regarded sanitary purposes. It was clear from the Return No. 489 that the disparities in lighting were something phenomenal, not only as between the wealthy and poor districts, but even among the wealthy districts themselves. Kensington spent £12,500 on lighting, as compared with £6,800 spent in Paddington. St. Pancras spent £19,000, while Islington spent £13,000. Islington had a population of 319,000, and St. Pancras of 234,000, and yet the lighting of Islington cost so much less than that of St. Pancras. This was an extraordinary difference. The question involved was whether one parish should contribute to another parish so that it might have electric lighting instead of gas. [Mr. J. STUART dissented.] No doubt the hon. Member had some information, but the House was not in possession of the information by which they might be able to test how far the money which they were giving would be used for the purposes they desired. The Committee were fairly unanimous as to the purposes to which the money should be applied; but, in the absence of information, they did not feel confident that the object they had in view would be carried out by the Bill. He believed that, while in the case of the poorer parishes nearly the whole of the money would be absorbed for sanitary purposes, in the case of the wealthier parishes it would be used to provide extravagant lighting. His own view was that a standard in regard to lighting, &c., should be established, and that in the case of parishes above that standard no allowance should be made. In that way there would be security that parishes in which the sanitary work and the lighting were adequately carried out would not receive the money simply in reduction of the rates.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said, that Rotherhithe would only get a miserable pittance of $2\frac{3}{4}$d. in the £1 under the Bill. To call that an equalisation of rates was a gross misnomer.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Gentleman was not entitled to raise the general question.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, had observed that while under this Bill they might be confident that in the poorer distrists the money would be properly applied, he was afraid that in the richer parishes the money might be applied to costly lighting. The mistake made was to suppose that the rich parishes got anything.

MR. GOSCHEN: I did not say the rich parishes, but the more wealthy parishes. I meant the parishes which are fairly well off, such as Islington.

MR. LOUGH said, that Islington was not fairly well off. It was an extremely poor parish. Hon. Gentlemen going that way drove along one good street, and thought that all the streets were the same. He did not believe that the evil predicted by the right hon. Gentleman would arise. However, he should not have interfered except that he wanted to say he did not like to see the tendency on the part of the Government to accept some Amendment in this direction. It seemed to him just as important that some contribution should be made for the streets and for lighting.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, he wanted to say a word in answer to the hon. Member for Chelsea, who did not think that paving ought to be included in the Bill. He (Sir A. Rollit) thought that good paving was a very important thing, and one way of obtaining continuity in the streets of London. It had been said that they should take no account of what was done in the provinces. His view, however, was that London had a great deal to learn from the Provincial Municipalities. Probably the differences of opinion manifested from time to time on his own side of the House with regard to local government arose from the fact that some of them had had an opportunity of seeing, by personal experience, what had been done in the Municipalities, and were anxious that the local government of London should be more assimilated, both in principle and practice, with that of the large provincial towns. In the Provinces, for instance, there was a uniformity of rating, notwithstanding the powers in the Public Health Act of 1875, to levy a special rate upon particular districts (a power which was often overlooked), and the sanitation of a borough—its lighting, and so on—were matters of common concern to which all districts contributed in the same way and degree.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, he thought that paving ought to be included in the Bill, and was glad to hear the expression of opinion that every portion of London was interested in the keeping up of the main roads. When the Bill had been carried through, he thought the London County Council might very well think of those parishes which were entirely main arteries like that of St. Luke's, and put their powers with regard to main roads into operation.

Question put, and negatived.

*SIR A. ROLLIT moved, in page 2, line 10, after "streets," insert—

"and such Sanitary Authority shall annually make a Return in the prescribed form to the Local Government Board showing how all sums received by it under this Act have been expended, and shall in such Return distinguish payments made under The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and payments made in respect of lighting and streets respectively."

He said the Amendment was not a hostile one, but consistent with the spirit and the letter of the Bill, and it was all the more necessary and desirable in view of the acceptance of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bethnal Green. It secured for the Local Government Board just that information which was necessary in order that the object of the hon. Member's Amendment might be carried out. His desire was to guard against the alleged danger of extravagance, and against the diversion of the equalisation contributions from the purposes for which they were primarily intended. He did not distrust the Local Authorities, but he thought it right that they should make Returns to the Local Government Board for the purpose of enabling that Department to check their expenditure periodically, and to furnish it with the necessary information.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 10, after the word "streets," to insert the words—

"and such Sanitary Authority shall annually make a Return in the prescribed form to the

Local Government Board showing how all sums received by it under this Act have been expended, and shall in such Return distinguish payments made under The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and payments made in respect of lighting and streets respectively."—(*Sir A. Rollit.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he had already intimated that he thought some Amendment of his kind ought to be adopted; but the wording of the hon. Member's Amendment might, in his opinion, be altered with advantage, and he had himself prepared an Amendment which would, he believed, effect the hon. Member's purpose in a better way. He hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member would consent to withdraw his proposal, and would allow the Amendment which he had drafted to be substituted in its place.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, the principle of his Amendment being thus conceded, he thought the suggestion was a very proper one, and he would therefore withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE moved the following new sub-section :—

"Every Sanitary Authority to whom a sum is paid under this Act in any year shall, within the prescribed time after the following thirty-first day of March, render to the Local Government Board a true account in the prescribed form, showing for the twelve months preceding the said day, the total amount of the sum so paid, and the total amount of the expenses incurred by the authority under each of the following heads :—

(*a*) under the Public Health (London) Act, 1891;
(*b*) in respect of lighting; and
(*c*) in respect of streets;

and showing the amount expended in respect of each head out of the sums paid to such authority under this Act."

COLONEL HUGHES said, he would like to suggest a different wording of the sub-section.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, they must adhere to the words of the Bill.

MR. GOSCHEN asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered whether it was possible to show how much of the expenditure was distinct from the amount paid out of the rates. Were the authorities to keep a separate account of this money? It would be of little value if mixed up with the general account, although it was difficult to see how the items could be earmarked. Before the Report stage the right hon. Gentleman might consider how this difficulty could be met. They wanted to know not what had been paid out of these funds, but what had been paid before.

MR. J. STUART said, was it not a question of expenditure over receipts? Supposing an authority expended £5,000 upon one of these objects and raised a rate to meet it which amounted to £4,200, then the balance would be thrown upon a portion of this vote.

Sub-section agreed to.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) moved, in page 2, line 15, at end, insert—

"(7) If any Sanitary Authority is found by the Local Government Board to have made default within the meaning of Section 101 of The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, the London County Council shall, if so directed by the Local Government Board, withhold the whole or any part of the grant (if any) next accruing due from the Equalisation Fund to such Sanitary Authority.

Any sums which may during any financial year be withheld in accordance with the foregoing enactment shall be carried forward to the credit of the Equalisation Fund in the following year."

He said the object of the Amendment was to couple the Bill with the Public Health (London) Act of 1891. It had been sometimes forgotten or not adequately appreciated that by the Public Health Act of 1891 the duty of supervision over the Sanitary Authority was conferred on the Central Authority, and by the same Act a considerable amount of control was given to the London County Council. It was true that every 6d. of expenditure was not earmarked, and that every 6d. could not be directly traced, but in the Act of 1891 there was machinery by which the County Council and the Local Government Board could keep up the Sanitary Authorities to a fair standard of efficient administration. He should like to add on this point that the use which was at the present time made by these two authorities of their powers was no criterion of the use that might be made of them, because the County Council had felt their hands to be tied by the consideration that in precisely those localities where stimulus was necessary, such as in the East End, and perhaps in the South, the authorities were already crushed down under a burden of rates to which no addition could be made. Now that the Committee were making a special grant for sanitary purposes he thought the occasion opportune, and therefore any Sanitary Authority which did not do its duty would be left absolutely without excuse. He had followed in this respect the precedent of the Act of 1870. The Amendment did not confer either upon the County Council or upon the Local Government Board any power which those Bodies did not at present possess; it simply provided a readier remedy, or an important power in reserve.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 15, at end, insert—

"(7) If any Sanitary Authority is found by the Local Government Board to have made default within the meaning of Section 101 of The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, the London County Council shall, if so directed by the Local Government Board, withhold the whole or any part of the grant (if any) next accruing due from the Equalisation Fund to such Sanitary Authority.

Any sums which may during any financial year be withheld in accordance with the foregoing enactment shall be carried forward to the credit of the Equalisation Fund in the following year."—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. BARTLEY said, he was glad the Government had accepted some such principle as was contained in the Amendment, but he must call attention to the point that objection had been taken to his Amendment, because it threw the onus on the Local Government Board. Under this Amendment the onus was thrown on the Local Government Board in just the same way. It must find out that a Local Authority was not doing its duty before it could act, for the Amendment did not provide that the County Council should report to them.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, he thought the hon. Gentleman was not familar with the section which his Amendment incorporated.

Mr. BARTLEY: Yes I am.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said, the Act recited

"that where complaint was made by the London County Council."

Mr. Pickersgill

Mr. BARTLEY said, that might be so, but this Amendment could only be put into force by the Local Government Board. The clause of the Public Health Act which the hon. Gentleman quoted was no doubt referred to; but the Amendment ran on different lines, and the commencement of proceedings must be with the Local Government Board.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that the clause must be construed in connection with Clause 101 of the Public Health Act. He should have been glad to insert a provision of this kind in the Bill at first, but it was better to let it come with the general assent of the House. He must submit the Amendment to the draftsman, but substantially he would accept it.

Mr. LOUGH said, he hoped the President of the Local Government Board would confine himself to the principle of the Amendment and cut out the precise terms. The object of the Amendment was opposed to the object of the Bill. The object of the Bill was to relieve the poor parishes of London, while the object of the Amendment was to secure further expenditure. Although they all agreed that the Public Health Act of 1891 should be put into operation, he thought it would be better to allow it to be put into operation as a result of the public opinion of a locality instead of under the iron system that the Amendment suggested. He thought the Amendment unnecessary and likely to lead to extravagance, as the Common Poor Fund had in some localities. The cost of the outdoor poor had increased very largely, and while he knew that much of the increase was owing to the better treatment of the poor, the results were by no means altogether satisfactory. To put this pressure from the Central Authority on the Local Authorities would be a very expensive proceeding. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pickersgill) had said that the County Council had not put its powers into operation, because it was aware of the heavy burdens already existing, but when this Bill was passed they would be expected to take such action. If the President of the Local Government Board accepted the Amendment, he hoped he would cut out the latter clause, which forfeited the grant, or otherwise modify it.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER said, he cordially agreed with the Amendment, which he thought was a very valuable one, and gave effect to the contention they had always held that the Local Government Board ought to have some control in this matter. He did not fall in with the view that there was any undue restriction. It only amounted to saying that if the Local Authorities did not do their duty the money should not be paid to them. That was a very desirable suggestion to put before the House. There appeared to be a hidden hand behind the President of the Local Government Board—that, he presumed, either of the Member for Hackney or of the Member for Shoreditch, who were the wirepullers of the Bill. However, he was very glad to see that something in the shape of the Amendment had been accepted.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had informed them in a diplomatic fashion that it was his intention from the beginning that there should be this kind of control, but that the proposal had better be subject to the general consent of the House. Well, they had played into his hands, but the right hon. Gentleman was so diplomatic that he concealed his intention from them. He had always understood that there were two Parties in the House with respect to this Bill. In the one were the immense majority of the Committee on both sides, who thought the Bill was one for improving sanitary work; in the other were the hon. Member for West Islington and the President of the Local Government Board, who thought the Bill was one for equalising rates. The opinion of the County Council, as declared by the hon. Member for Shoreditch, agreed with that of the majority of the Committee. It was contained in the statement that "the object of the Bill is not to equalise rates." Now, at last the hon. Member for West Islington had been defeated, and a sanitary character was to be given to the Bill. He was glad that the Amendment had been accepted; and the Opposition were ready to take their share of the responsibility.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, that the insertion of the Amendment would not detract from the effect of the Bill in making the richer parishes contribute to the poorer. Incidentally, it enabled the poorer parishes to perform their sanitary duties better. He was only doing what the right hon. Member for St. George's did in 1870, when he established a Common Poor Fund and described his Bill as one for the equalisation of rates.

Colonel HUGHES said, he did not quite understand this proposal. Did it mean that the whole grant would be forfeited even after a parish had contributed the 6d.? His parish contributed £4,000, and was entitled to receive £10,000. Surely the hon. Gentleman did not mean that the whole grant should be forfeited, but only the difference between the sum contributed to and the sum received from the Common Fund. If they made the Amendment only applicable to those parishes which received the grant it was evident that they would only be dealing with a portion of the parishes in London. They would be taking the control over the parishes which received only. His impression was that the control of the Central Body was already obnoxious, and led to delay and expense, and irregularity. It would be better to leave the power of the Local Government Board as it was now.

Mr. J. STUART said, he took it that the meaning of the clause was that the sum to be forfeited was the difference between the amount of the contribution and the grant. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider what would be the effect of the clause.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, this clause had been carefully considered by the draftsman, but the point raised by the hon. Member for Woolwich would have attention. He did not think the words as they stood were quite adequate. He would have it considered between this stage and Report. What he was anxious for was that the principle of the thing should be adopted by the House.

Mr. BARTLEY said, this was a more important matter than appeared. They were calling upon the whole of London to prevent the localities from being in an insanitary condition, and that it was not sufficient for them to say that they did not want to do this work. In his view, where the conditions were not fulfilled, the whole amount should be withdrawn. If they withdrew the difference merely they would be simply penalising the poorer parishes.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, it would not be fair to apply the clause to the parishes which contributed nothing whatever.

Question put, and agreed to.

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

SIR R. G. WEBSTER asked whether he would be in Order in making some observations upon the question of compounding?

THE CHAIRMAN said, he did not think that would be in Order.

MR. GOSCHEN said, he thought the question of equalisation must include the question of compounding. He would forego any claim he might have to speak, but he thought it was clear that the words of the clause covered almost everything.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

MR. FISHER (Fulham) said, that in the general discussion that took place on the meaning of the word "population," he pointed out that a manifest injustice would be done to outlying parts of London if "population" were taken to mean, as defined in the clause—

> "Population according to the last published Census for the time being."

The population of his own constituency at the last Census was 91,639, and that population would now be increased by something like 20,000. He, therefore, moved an Amendment which would make the definition read—

> "The expression 'population' means population according to the last published estimate of population made by the Registrar General."

He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make some further effort to meet the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 31, to leave out the words "Census for the time being," and insert the words "estimate of population made by the Registrar General."—(*Mr. Fisher.*)

Mr. Bartley

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he admitted that the Bill as it stood worked somewhat hardly on parishes like Fulham. The difficulty he had found was that the Registrar General would not undertake the reponsibility of making an estimate year by year unless there were provisions in the Bill for a Quinquennial Census. He found it would be possible to have a Quinquennial Census without all the elaborate details of the ordinary Census, which would enable the Registrar General to make his estimate for the intervening years. The total cost to the Metropolis was estimated at about £6,400, and the London County Council were quite willing that it should be borne by the equalisation fund. He would undertake to bring up a clause on Report giving effect to the principle of the Amendment, and therefore he hoped the Amendment would now be withdrawn.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman proposed that the cost of the Census should be borne upon the rates of one year or spread over several years? The people of London were complaining bitterly of the constantly-increasing rates, and if the expenditure for this Census were to be paid by them its cost should at least be spread over the five years. In his constituency the other day the ratepayers refused to agree to the Public Libraries rate, and there was a strong feeling in many parts of London respecting the increase of the rates. If the Government were going to incur an expenditure of £6,500 in order to carry out this Census every five years the cost ought to be spread over more than six months or a year. He thought the cost ought to be spread over five years.

MR. GOSCHEN: Do I understand that the money is to be raised as an extra sum?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: Practically, the cost will fall upon those parishes which benefit under the Bill. They will have less to receive in consequence of the cost of the Census; and inasmuch as it is really to be taken for their benefit, I think that they should pay for it.

Mr. R. G. WEBSTER asked whether the Census would be taken in the usual form?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: No; not so fully.

*Mr. COHEN said, he thought that Londoners ought to be very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his proposal, and he did not think the right hon. Gentleman's estimate would be much exceeded, inasmuch as it was only proposed to take a Census of the population without obtaining any of the other particulars asked for by the ordinary Census.

Mr. ALBAN GIBBS asked the right hon. Gentleman to let the House have the wording of his proposal before the Report stage.

Mr. THORNTON (Clapham) said, that, as a Member for a borough the population of which was increasing by leaps and bounds, he considered the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman one of great importance, and he was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for it.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman, partly I admit in the interest of my own constituents, that the Census should be taken at a fair time, and not at a time when large numbers of persons are absent from certain districts of London. St. George's, Hanover Square, is under the impression that it lost 1-10th of its population, because the last Census was taken on a Sunday. I think that the next Census will show that our population is considerably larger than it now appears to be. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not allow any desire to penalise certain districts in the Metropolis to influence his choice of the date when the Census will be taken.

Mr. FISHER: After the handsome manner in which I have been met by the right hon. Gentleman, I desire to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN: The other Amendments to the clause are no longer in Order. The first of the new clauses is not in Order, and I think the same is to be said of all the others except the last.

Mr. KIMBER said, in that case he desired to move the last new clause standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University (Sir J. Lubbock) and entitled "Procedure in case of excessive expenditure."

The CHAIRMAN: I have considerable doubts about this clause, and I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will be good enough to point out the difference between this clause and the provision which appears in the Bill.

*Mr. KIMBER said, the proposed new clause read as follows:—

(Procedure in case of excessive expenditure.)

"Where any portion of the expenditure incurred by a Sanitary Authority under The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, shall appear to the Local Government Board to be excessive, they shall notify the amount of such excess to the Sanitary Authority, and, after hearing the Sanitary Authority, may for all purposes relating to the grant disallow the whole or any part of such excess."

He pointed out that the proposal would give an executive authority to the Local Government Board which they did not possess under the Bill. The clause was permissive, and it did not follow that there would be a single case in which any parish would come under any punishment under it.

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he was informed that no case had ever occurred in which it had appeared to the Local Government Board that the expenditure incurred by a Sanitary Authority under the Act referred to was excessive. That being so, he did not think the new clause was necessary.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, it was clear that the clause was entirely different from that which appeared in the Bill, because whilst the one dealt with expending too much the other dealt with spending too little. He thought the new clause might cover a case of extravagance. There might be cases in which a waste of money had occurred, and if the provision were adopted it might act as a precaution against extravagant expenditure in connection with electric lighting or otherwise.

Question put, and negatived.

*SIR J. GOLDSMID asked when the Report stage would be taken, as some Members were thinking of taking a holiday?

*MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he did not think it would be taken earlier than Monday, but he could not say precisely when it would be taken.

Bill reported; as amended to be considered upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 351.]

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL. (No. 246.)

CONSIDERATION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [6th August] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended by the Standing Committee.

And which Amendment was, in page 9, line 6, to leave out from the word "society," to the word "shall," in line 7. —(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton) said, that he did not propose to proceed with the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Mr. HOPWOOD, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 9, line 6, leave out "he proves," and insert "it appear."

COLONEL HUGHES moved, in page 9, lines 30 and 31, leave out "after the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five." He said, this Amendment had reference to Societies which called themselves Building Societies, although many of them were banks. He referred especially to the Birkbeck Building Society, which was, properly speaking, a bank. Building Societies were prohibited from calling themselves banks, and he thought banks ought not to be allowed to call themselves Building Societies. He objected to the retention of this date in the clause, inasmuch as the effect would be to exempt the Birkbeck from the operation of the Bill. The Birkbeck Society had £460,000 lent on mortgage, while its total assets were over £6,000,000, so that they borrowed 12 times as much as their mortgages. Whilst the Government were imposing restrictions upon Building Societies with the object of preventing them borrowing more than their mortgages, here was a Building Society which had borrowed 12 times as much as its mortgages. It was really having one law for the rich and another for the poor. The exceptions made by the Bill was made in favour of the strong, whilst very onerous terms were put upon the weak. He was sorry that he believed his Amendment was not to be accepted by the Government. He thought the Birkbeck ought to trade under its proper title.

Amendment proposed, in page 9, line 30, to leave out the words "after the year one thousand eight hundred and fifty-five."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.) said, the Government had considered this question very carefully. He admitted that the clause as it stood entailed a somewhat anomalous condition of things. Certain Building Societies carried on business in land and banking under the Act of 1836, which would be illegal under the Act of 1874. If these Societies were brought under the Act of 1874 and the Bill they were now considering, undoubtedly they would be put to great inconvenience and possibly exposed to great danger. Having regard to this and to recent events connected with the Birkbeck Society, the Government had come to the conclusion that it would not be right to force them to become Incorporated Societies, and they had therefore inserted this provision in the Bill, which exempted Societies established before 1855 from the action of the Bill with the exception of placing them under Section 40 of the Act of 1874. This provision was inserted in the Bill and agreed to by the Select Committee last year, and various Societies affected had constantly accepted it as a decision not to be disturbed. The

Amendment of the hon. Member, therefore, could not be accepted. From the Societies established subsequent to 1855 he might say that they had not received a single protest as to this clause.

Mr. BARTLEY said, it was a great pity that Institutions like the Birkbeck did not take the opportunity, when it was afforded to them, of making themselves into banks. It was a great anomaly that any Institution should carry on a banking business under the title of a Building Society. There was a great deal of feeling upon this subject, and as they were anxious not to lose the Bill by opposition which might have been offered upon this point, they decided not to go into it. He hoped the Amendment would not be pressed, because he and his friends would be obliged (though with great reluctance) to support the Bill as it stood.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Mr. H. Gladstone, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 9, lines 32 and 33, leave out "submit to the Secretary of State an Annual Report," and insert——

"Cause to be made an abstract and report of the annual accounts and statements of societies and."

Page 9, lines 34 and 35, leave out "this Report shall be laid," and insert "shall lay the same before the Secretary of State and."

***Mr. HOPWOOD** said, he had an Amendment down in page 10, line 9, to leave out "five," and insert "six." He understood that the Government were opposed to the Amendment, but that they were prepared to meet the views of those he represented under Clause 2. Under these circumstances, he would not press his Amendment.

On Motion of Colonel Hughes, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Schedule 1, page 11, line 4, after "mortgage," insert "where the property is not in possession of the society and."

Schedule 1, page 11, Part I., column 4, after "leasehold," insert "and term unexpired at end of official year."

On Motion of Mr. Whittaker, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Schedule 1, page 11, line 16, leave out "is," and insert "has been twelve months."

***Mr. CREMER** (Shoreditch, Haggerston) moved an Amendment to add an additional column to Schedule 1, which should set out the nature of the property upon which advances had been made by the Society, and if the property consisted of houses to state whether they were occupied, and if they were unoccupied how long they had been so. He said that one case which had come under his notice would satisfy the House as to the necessity for some such Amendment as this. A Building Society which some years ago had an extensive business in London, by some means or other, unfortunately for the investors, advanced very considerable sums of money upon house property in the neighbourhood of London, a great deal more than the property was really worth. For a series of years the houses were unoccupied, and they fell into the hands of the Society. The Directors could neither sell or let the houses, yet for a series of years the members of the Society were practically unacquainted with that fact, the houses having been returned year by year in the assets as valuable property, when, as a matter of fact, it was unrealisable and practically worthless. In the column which he proposed should be inserted in the Schedule, he wanted to prevent a recurrence of such disasters. Fortunately, the members of that Society discovered the imposition which was being practised upon them, turned out the old Directors, and saved the Society from absolute wreck. It was wound up, and all the obligations which the Society had incurred were paid off. But other Societies had from the same causes been more unfortunate, and had been wound up without the depositors and shareholders getting anything in return for the money they had invested. If this column were inserted it would be practically impossible for a Board of Directors to continue the practices to which he had referred.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, in Part II., of Schedule 1, after column 4, to insert as a new column, the words—

"Whether occupied, and if unoccupied how long it has been so."—(*Mr. Cremer.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. H. GLADSTONE said, he quite agreed that the object which his hon. Friend had in view was a desirable one, and he would be glad if the Government could see their way to give effect to it; but as it stood they could not accept it. He thought that the additional columns would overload the Schedule, and that it would be found not to work well in practice. In addition, he thought that the Amendment as it stood could be very easily evaded. He would undertake, however, to see whether, perhaps by the addition of a foot-note to the Schedule, they could in any way meet his hon. Friend. But they could not accept the Amendment as it stood.

*MR. JACKSON (Leeds, N.) said, he hoped the hon. Member would not press the Amendment, as he thought it would be quite inoperative. He would point out to the hon. Member that this Schedule was to set forth particulars of each property upon which a mortgage had been granted, but that property might include a number of houses—might include, in many cases, 20 houses. But there might be one of those houses unoccupied, and it would be quite impossible to set out in the Schedule one house in 20. There was another difficulty. One object which had been carefully looked to and guarded was that of trying to avoid identification. It was not proposed to set out a description of the property, and supposing there were 20 houses under one mortgage, if one house should be unoccupied, it appeared to him that it would be impracticable to state that, because particulars would have to be given. He thought, however, the hon. Member's object would be gained in that; he would get in the Schedule what was the income from the property, and that was the real point which was of importance to the members of the Society generally. They would get, for the first time, as the result of this Schedule, what was the gross income, what were the outgoings, and what was the net income from the property, and that was the information which he thought it was desirable should be obtained in the interest of the members of the Society. He hoped the hon. Member would not press the Amendment.

MR. CREMER said, that though he did not agree with the views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds, if the promise made by the First Commissioner was given effect to in another place, he would be quite willing, if a foot-note to the Schedule were inserted, as had been indicated, not to press the Amendment. He gathered, although he indistinctly heard the First Commissioner, that he would make an effort in another place to give effect to the Amendment by inserting such a foot-note?

MR. H. GLADSTONE: Yes.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Colonel HUGHES, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Schedule 1, page 11, Part II., column 5, after "leasehold," add "and term unexpired at end of official year."

Schedule 1, page 11, Part II., add additional columns,—

Column 12, "Net Income."

Column 13, "Annual percentage of net income on account in column 9."

*MR. H. GLADSTONE moved—Schedule 1, page 11, at end of Part II., add—

Part III.

Particulars to be set forth in the case of a mortgage where these repayments are upwards of twelve months in arrear.

Date of advance.	Original valuation of property.	Whether subject to any prior mortgage or charge; if so, what amount.	Whether freehold, copyhold, or leasehold.	Amount of advance.	Present debt.	Number of months in arrear.	Amount of payments in arrear.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	£	£		£	£		£

Mr. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley) moved, as an Amendment to the proposed Amendment, in line 2, after "mortgage," insert "not included in Part I. or Part II. of this Schedule."

Amendment agreed to.

Colonel HUGHES moved, in line 3, at end, add "and where the property is not in possession of the Society."

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland) said, he would like to know what was proposed to be done with regard to the extension of time under Clause 2?

***Mr. H. GLADSTONE** said, the Government were anxious to do all in their power to help Societies to meet the difficulties that they would find themselves in under the new situation, for they felt that the terms imposed by Clause 2 were very stringent. They were ready to move an Amendment in another place suspending the operation of the second clause for a year from the passing of the Act.

Amendment (*Mr. H. Gladstone*), as amended, agreed to.

***Mr. H. GLADSTONE** moved, in Schedule 2, page 12, column 3, at end, leave out

"and the words from 'if any Society under this Act receives loans or deposits,' to 'so received in excess.'"

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. H. GLADSTONE asked if, by the consent of the House, he might take the Third Reading now?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question is, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

***Mr. H. GLADSTONE** said, he should like, on behalf of the Government, to express his acknowledgments to the Members in various parts of the House who had assisted in the passing of the Bill; in particular he had to thank the right hon. Member for North Leeds for the valuable assistance he had given in perfecting the measure. Several clauses had been taken from the Bill which he (the right hon. Member for North Leeds) introduced last year, and the Government were under great obligations to him.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) [EXPENSES].

Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Local Government Board for Scotland in the execution of their duties, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session, to establish a Local Government Board for Scotland, and make further provision for Local Government in Scotland."

Resolution agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 337.)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for consideration, as amended, read, and discharged.

Bill re-committed in respect of an Amendment to Clauses 6 and 19 respectively; considered in Committee, and reported.

Bill, as amended by the Standing Committee and the Committee of the Whole House, considered.

***Mr. SPEAKER** ruled that the first three new clauses on the Paper standing in the name of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir C. Pearson) were out of Order—namely:—

(Complaint to Sheriff on question of chargeability.)

"Where relief has been or shall be granted to any person otherwise than upon an order or judgment of the Sheriff pronounced under Section 73 of the Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845, it shall be lawful for any two Parish Councillors or for any five ratepayers of the parish to lodge a written complaint with the Sheriff of the county in which the parish from which such person has claimed relief, or any portion of such parish, is situated, complaining that such person is not legally entitled to relief, and setting forth the ground of such complaint, and the said Sheriff shall forthwith, if he be of opinion that such person is, upon the facts stated, not legally entitled to relief, order intimation of such application to be made to such person, and also to the clerk of the Parish Council, requiring them, within a given time to be specified in the order, to give in a statement in writing showing the reasons why the relief was granted, and the Sheriff, after such procedure as he shall deem necessary, shall make an order finding such person to be legally entitled or not entitled to relief, and such order shall be final and binding on the Parish Council: Provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to enable the said Sheriff to determine on the adequacy of the relief, or to interfere in respect of the amount of relief to be given in any individual case."

(Complaint to Board on question of undue relief.)

"Where relief has been or shall be granted to any person, it shall be lawful for any two Parish Councillors or for any five ratepayers of the parish to lodge a written complaint with the Board, complaining that the relief granted is excessive in amount, or is of a kind that should not have been granted, and setting forth the grounds of such complaint; and the Board shall, after such intimation as shall be deemed proper, investigate the grounds of the complaint; and if upon inquiry it shall appear to the Board that such complaint is well founded in whole or in part, the Board may order the Parish Council to reduce the amount or to vary the kind of relief granted as may be specified in the order, and the Parish Council shall make such reduction or variation accordingly: Provided that where any such complaint has been made and disposed of, no subsequent complaint touching the same poor person shall be competent unless either (1) such poor person has in the meantime ceased to be in receipt of relief, or (2) such a material change of circumstances is averred as in the opinion of the Board warrants a futher investigation."

(Powers of Board as to assuming Poor Law administration in a Parish.)

"When and so often as (1) the total assessment for the relief of the poor in any parish imposed upon owners and occupiers taken together, continues for more than one year to exceed the rate of 5s. in the £1; or (2) the Board, on the representation of a ratepayer or ratepayers who have paid not less than one-tenth of the whole poor rate collected within the parish during the preceding local financial year shall, after due inquiry, find that the administration of the Poor Law in a parish is unduly lax, or has resulted in extravagance or excessive relief, or is in any other respect not being conducted according to the intention of the several Acts for the time being in force for the relief of the poor, it shall be lawful for the Board, by order, to withdraw from the Parish Council of such parish the administration of the Poor Law therein, and the whole powers and duties of the Parish Council, or any committee thereof, touching the relief of the poor; and the same shall thereupon be vested in and exercised and discharged by such and so many paid officers as the Board may think fit to appoint to carry the same into execution; and the Board may from time to time recall such appointments, and define and direct the execution of the duties of such officers, and the amount and nature of the security, if any, to be given by them or any of them, and fix and regulate the amount of salaries payable to such officers respectively, and the time and mode of payment thereof; and such salaries shall be chargeable on and payable out of the poor rate of such parish; provided that unless the Board shall sooner revoke the appointment of such paid officers, they shall hold their offices for the term of one year from the date of their appointment, and thenceforth till the time of the next election of a Parish Council for the said parish, and no longer."

*MR. SPEAKER, in giving his ruling, said the first Amendment was scarcely in Order, as the question of Poor Law relief was subject to a distinct Statute, and he thought that, under a Bill for the constitution of a Local Government Board in Scotland, it was not competent—certainly not without an Instruction, and he doubted if it would be even with an Instruction—to amend the general Poor Law of the land. Also, the first of the two Amendments in the name of the right hon. and learned Gentleman dealing with the Law of Settlement should be treated as a distinct measure of settlement.

*SIR C. J. PEARSON then moved the following New Clause:—

(Saving ecclesiastical arrangements.)

"Nothing in this Act, nor anything done in pursuance of this Act, shall alter any right to or affecting teinds or any ecclesiastical arrangements or jurisdictions."

This clause, he said, was taken almost word for word from the Loca Government Act of 1889, and was to act as a saving clause in regard to the elaborate provisions with respect to boundaries. He had placed it on the Paper in consequence of some Amendments put down by the Secretary for Scotland on Clause 47.

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the Government were quite prepared to admit the importance of the view put forward by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but he was advised that the Government would fulfil the object aimed at in the Amendment by an Amendment further on in the Paper.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought the discussion of this question might very well be deferred until they reached Clause 47.

Motion and Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston) moved the following new clause:—

(Application of Act to certain parishes.)

"This Act shall apply to the parishes specified in the Fifth Schedule annexed to this Act, subject to the modifications and alterations following—(that is to say)—(1) In the year 1898, and in every third year thereafter, simultaneously with the preparation of the Municipal Registrar in a burgh within which any such parish is wholly or partly situated, the assessor charged with the preparation thereof shall prepare, and shall arrange in the parish wards fixed by or under the provisions of this Act, a separate list of the persons qualified to be parish electors within a burghal parish or within the burghal part of a parish; and the whole enactments of this or any other Act relative to the registration of burgh electors or parish electors, including the provisions relating to officers and dates, and to numbering and placing distinctive marks on the Register or list, shall with the necessary alterations of notices and other forms and other necessary variations, extend and apply to the preparation of the said list; and it shall be lawful to object to the insertion or omission of the name of any person in the part of said list applicable to a parish ward as nearly as may be in the same manner, and subject to the same provisions as to appeal and otherwise, as in the case of any entry in or omission from any Municipal Register or list. (2) The nomination of Parish Councillors in such parishes shall take place on the second Tuesday, and the election of such Councillors on the third Tuesday of November in the year 1898, and in every third year thereafter. (3) The expenditure incurred in the preparation of the said separate list of parish electors, in so far as relating to any such parish, and the expenditure incurred in the election of Parish Councillors for such parish, shall be a charge upon the poor rate levied therein."

The hon. Member, in supporting the Amendment, said that as they were thoroughly satisfied with the provision for the first election they might wait for further legislation, as the second election could not take place for three years. But if the provision was a good one, they had better get it in now than depend upon the uncertainty of the future. This proposal, he would point out, only affected Glasgow. There was no other interest that could possibly be touched.

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he recognised to the full the difficulties which Glasgow had put forward frequently and with very great ability in different shapes. The two points mentioned by his hon. Friend were, first, that it was important to Glasgow to have a separate list for municipal purposes and Parish Council purposes; and, in the second place, a separate election for municipal and for Parish Council purposes. Both those were got by the provisional clause as it stood at the end of the Bill. But that was not all. He was most anxious, if possible, not to have any exceptional legislation in this Bill. His hon. Friend the Member for St. Rollox, in a carefully drawn Amendment, brought the question forward in Committee, and was willing to introduce into the clause an Amendment to the effect that it should only be for the space of three years. As the Bill stood there was a provisional clause, and during a period of three and a-half years no alteration would be required. He did not wish to go deeper into the case now, but he believed that if such a change were required it would be required not only for Glasgow, but for other parts of the country likewise. Therefore, he thought they had better wait until then. He therefore thought the House would do well to affirm the decision of the Committee.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) said, he was sorry the right hon. Gentleman would not accept this course, which had been so strongly desired by responsible persons in Glasgow. His right hon. Friend said he did not like exceptional legislation, but when there was diversity of circumstances they must have diversity of legislation. It was perfectly true that the scheme of the Bill fitted perfectly well the great majority of the parishes; but when the representatives of the greatest city of Scotland came to them and said that it was absolutely impossible to carry forward the elections by the scheme of the Bill, he thought that a very serious representation indeed. Those authorities said they were satisfied with the arrangement for the first election, but it was not creditable statesmanship to pass a scheme applicable for the first election, but avowedly and admittedly, on the authority of the Minister in charge of the Bill, impossible to work in Glasgow in the future. A very satisfactory scheme had been embodied in the Amendments put forward by the Member for St. Rollox (Sir J. Carmichael), and he would regret very much if the House did not accept the proposal.

Sir J. CARMICHAEL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) thought there had been a little misunderstanding in regard to what had been proposed by the Secretary for Scotland in respect of the clause which he (Sir J. Carmichael) took charge of in Committee. There were two Amendments moved to that clause by the Secretary for Scotland. The first was accepted by the authorities in Glasgow, and was embodied in the clause; but the second Amendment, making it a purely temporary provision, remained in the name of the Secretary for Scotland, and was never accepted by himself (Sir J. Carmichael) or the authorities in Glasgow. They were, of course, very glad that the Secretary for Scotland had met them as far as he had done, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman had done all he could to meet the views of the Glasgow authorities; but the practical difficulties appeared to be almost insurmountable after the first elections were over. However, he understood from his right hon. Friend that he looked forward, between now and the year 1898, to opportunities for rearranging that machinery; and therefore, as it would be a very formidable task to re-arrange it now and to insert fresh Schedules and exceptional legislation, and as the Schedule would have to include other towns and places which had not yet been consulted, he thought they might do wisely to be content with the assurance of the Secretary for Scotland that this should not be considered a settled matter, but would be reconsidered before 1898.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said, that what the Secretary for Scotland had said, although conciliatory in tone, was extraordinary in substance. He agreed in the objects and saw no objection to the clause itself, beyond the fact that it was a clause which applied to one part of the country and not to other parts of the country which did not happen to require it. But the right hon. Gentleman said that, although he acknowledged the danger that this clause was intended to deal with, nevertheless there would be ample opportunity in the next three years to do anything that might require to be done. That argument seemed rather an unfortunate one. They might depend upon it that there would be other defects found in this Bill which were not now foreseen, and which Parliament might have hereafter to deal with. But when a defect was actually seen, and nobody had any objection to the remedy proposed, it was in accordance with ordinary business and practice that they should take this opportunity of amending the Bill, and not throw the burden on their successors, who might have something else to do than to rehandle this question. However, if the Government wished to persist in that view of bringing in supplementary Bills next Session, they could not prevent them taking that course. If his hon. Friend desired to take the opinion of the House, he would assuredly divide with him in the Lobby, for it appeared to him that his hon. Friend had made out a good case—one which no one had attempted to answer—and the House ought not to go through the comedy of passing a Bill the defects of which they already saw without amending it.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.) said, that the right hon. Gentleman must surely have uttered his last sentences under some strange mistake. The Government did not admit that there was any error requiring correction.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, surely yes.

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: No; certainly not. There was a general rule provided in this Bill for the method of election. That was satisfactory for the first election in Glasgow. But there were two points which, as he understood, were proposed to be raised under the new clause which had been moved. One arose from the supposed difficulty of making conterminous the parish wards and the municipal wards, and the other the difficulty of polling the two sets of electors on the same day. These were two separate and distinct things. As regarded the first, there was ample provision in the Bill for making the wards conterminous in Glasgow as well as in other places. The Government thought that before this difficulty could arise, the clauses that came under notice later, if properly worked, would solve difficulty number one; and as to difficulty number two, that was applicable to the whole country. In Edinburgh they were not unacquainted with this state of things. They had had experience of it for a long time, when the Municipal and Road Trust elections were held on the same day, and no difficulty was found in conducting them simultaneously. If Glasgow had a large population, it had also large staffs and large funds, and if additional clerks or polling rooms were required, these could easily be supplied. The Government thought that the general provisions of this Bill were appropriate to Glasgow as well as to the rest of the country, and he understood that what his right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland meant was that if experience showed that the view of the Government was wrong, and if a case for special treatment could be made out, it would be considered. Certainly, the Government did not think that there was any defect whatever in the Bill, and they did not expect any further legislation would be requisite.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) had the following Amendment on the Paper to Clause 3 :—

Page 1, line 25, at end, add,—

"Provided also, that the said Board shall have power to make Rules regulating, restricting, or affecting the deportation of paupers from Scotland to Ireland, which Rules shall be of the same effect as if they were enacted in this Act."

*Mr. SPEAKER : I think the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Healy) was in the House when I stated that any Amendment altering the Poor Law and the Law of Settlement would be out of Order. I gather that the hon. Member proposes to give the Board the power to make Rules regulating, restricting, or affecting the deportation of paupers. If among these powers there is the power of shortening the period of settlement, that, I think, would be clearly out of Order, inasmuch as it would affect the general Law of Settlement in a Bill not specially devoted to the alteration of the Poor Law.

Mr. T. M. HEALY : With your permission, I would vary the Amendment, and move simply to transfer the exercise of these powers from the Sheriffs, who, as I understand, now exercise that power, to the Local Government Board. I would move, after the word "Act," to insert

"and all powers now vested in Sheriffs relating to the deportation or removal of destitute poor from Scotland."

The effect will be to leave the powers as they are, but change the authority which is to exercise them. I submit with confidence to the Government that this is a matter which requires some alteration and amendment of the law. For many years persons who had not been born in Scotland, but who have given their entire labour and lives to work in that country, have been sometimes, under circumstances of great hardship, deported from Scotland to the country of their nativity, simply because——

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR : I rise to a point of Order. I understand that you, Sir, have ruled out of Order the clause of my hon. and learned Friend near me, the effect of which was not in any way to alter the Poor Law of Scotland, though it was directed to give some power of review of the acts of the authority administering the Poor Law. It appears to me, if the hon. Member is now moving his clause, that it comes under the ruling you have just given, and is really on all fours with the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

*Mr. SPEAKER : It comes very near, but I do not think it is exactly the same, because, as the right hon. Gentleman has observed, the form of the Amendment on the Paper gave power of review. As I understand the altered Amendment, it refers to the power which administers the law, and which may not properly or impartially exercise that power. The hon. Member therefore proposes to transfer bodily the powers now exercised by the Sheriff to this new Board, without in any way altering the Law of Settlement or any rule of the existing pauper law.

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR : Might I point out, Sir, that there are two separate and distinct statutes affected by this Amendment—the Poor Law Act of 1845, upon which the Law of Settlement depends, and the Act of 1862, which regulates the exercise of the powers of deportation, but the powers of deportation were given in consequence of the law as to settlement. Accordingly this Amendment, in our judgment, would touch that law distinctly, and would, in effect, give the power to the new Board to repeal the enactments of the two separate Statutes of 1845 and 1862.

*Mr. SPEAKER: If I may interrupt, is the right hon. and learned Gentleman not referring to the Amendment on the Paper?

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: No; I was taking the limited Amendment.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Let me read the words again—

> "And all powers now vested in Sheriffs relating to the deportation or removal of destitute poor from Scotland."

It simply vests the existing powers in a different body.

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: The Amendment proposed to transfer from judicial officers to the Board the administration of a department of the Poor Law. Under the Act of 1845 and the Act of 1862, of course, what lies at the foundation of deportation is the law by which, if a person has never acquired a settlement in Scotland, or has lost that settlement, he is sent to the country where he has a settlement.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: On the question of Order——

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not on the question of Order.

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR: I am quite content to leave it to the Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I quite understand that if any alteration of the Law of Settlement is implied in this transfer from the Sheriff to this new Board it would then be out of Order, but a mere transfer of existing powers without any power to alter the Law of Settlement would, I think, be perfectly consistent with order. Under the circumstances, I think the hon. and learned Gentleman may proceed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY was extremely obliged to the Speaker for the ruling he had given. What he now proposed was, he admitted, less satisfactory than the Amendment in its original form. The new Local Government Board would be presided over by a responsible Minister, and therefore it might be assumed that it would not allow the transfer to Ireland of paupers who had been in Scotland 30, 40, or 50 years, and who had given all the labour of their lives to that country, and that it would not exercise its powers in the same harsh way as Sheriffs had exercised them. As the Lord Advocate had said, Sheriffs had supposed that they were exercising a purely judicial discretion. He hoped if his Amendment were adopted that the Local Government Board would temper the very stringent judicial views the Sheriffs had taken, and would act with lenity and in something of the spirit of the times. Nobody knew better than the Secretary for Scotland the hardships of the existing situation. At that very moment the Irish Office had a Bill to abolish the existing system of deportation, and nothing but the great stress upon the time of the House had prevented its introduction. He was somewhat surprised that the right hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. A. J. Balfour), no doubt simply actuated by a desire for Order, should yet seek to trip him up on a point of Order.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Oh, no. All I desired was that both the hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendment and our Amendment should be treated alike, and that what was done in the one case should be done in the other.

Mr. T. M. HEALY was sorry if he had misinterpreted the right hon. Gentleman. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman when in Office always desired that the very great harshness of these Rules should be tempered in some way. As regards Ireland, they had never succeeded in getting from Parliament a single concession in the way of local government, and could it be considered surprising that Irish Members should seize the only opportunity at their disposal to endeavour to secure some amelioration of the laws affecting their country? He trusted that the Government would, at any rate, accept the Amendment in principle, and allow it to be placed on the Statute Book. He would, therefore, move that among the powers devolving upon the new Local Government Board in Scotland should be

> "all powers now vested in Sheriffs relating to the deportation or removal of destitute poor from Scotland."

Amendment proposed to be made to the Bill, in page 1, line 19, after the word "Act," to insert the words

"And all powers now vested in Sheriffs relating to the deportation or removal of destitute poor from Scotland."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he must at once notice, as showing that in the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman this Amendment opened up a large question, his statement that a Bill was in preparation by the Irish Office for doing away with the transportation or deportation of Irish paupers from Scotland to Ireland, and that the only reason why that Bill, with the large scope which he had attributed to it, was not introduced this Session was the question of time. That certainly could not be said to be the case. This was a question which concerned not Ireland alone, but Scotland greatly, and most certainly a Bill of the sweeping terms described by the hon. Member would not be, and could not have been, introduced without the very fullest notice to Scotland beforehand, and without the Boards and the communities concerned having full time to discuss it, and, if necessary, to make recommendations and remonstrances about it. That the present system was open to amendment nobody felt more than the Board of Supervision itself; but that the present obligation of Scotland to support persons who were not born in that country should be altered from the basis on which it stood at present was a matter which would touch Scotland quite as closely, he believed, as any matter which could well be brought before Parliament, and it would have to be done with very great care and in a manner to satisfy the sense of justice in Scotland as well as to remove the grievance in Ireland. He owned he did not see that the Amendment would very seriously alter the situation. He did not very well see how the fact of the Board deciding the mere detail whether a particular person ought under the law to be supported in Scotland or deported from Scotland would alter the principle on which the law was carried out. Though he would not raise any question of Order, he felt that if they admitted this Amendment they would be having Amendments from other quarters with regard to the administration of the Poor Law of a nature which they would be compelled to refuse. He regarded this Amendment as little more than an abstract Resolution to the effect that the relations between Ireland and Scotland with regard to the maintenance of the poor ought to be altered, and he was willing to admit that they should be reconsidered, but he was not willing to introduce this Amendment into the Bill, because he did not think that it would be of any service there, and he must own it would be rather inconsistent with his idea of the manner in which this Bill, which had been so thoroughly considered in Committee, should be treated by the Government when it came out of Committee.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 42 ; Noes 177.—(Division List, No. 214.)

*Captain HOPE (Linlithgow) had the following Amendment on the Paper :—

Page 2, line 2, leave out from the first "Scotland" to end of Sub-section, and insert "and Commissioners, in number not fewer than three nor more than five, of whom one shall be appointed vice president and chairman of the Board in the absence of the president."

Mr. SPEAKER : I am not sure whether or not this Amendment increases the charge. But as I understand it, the effect of the Amendment would be to add to the paid element. If that is so it is fatal to the Amendment.

Mr. PARKER SMITH moved, on behalf of his hon. Friend the Member for Dumfries-shire, the omission of "three" and the insertion of "five" in page 2, line 3. The proposal of the Amendment was, he said, to add two to the Board who might be unpaid, but who would be well acquainted with local government in its various forms. The definition of the sort of men was contained in another Amendment on the Paper in the name of his hon. Friend—namely, that they should be persons versed in the administration of local government in Town Councils, County Councils, Parochial Boards, or Parish Councils. He thought it would be a great loss if such men were not added.

Mr. SPEAKER : It is not clear whether the Amendment proposes to add paid members. I gather from the hon. Member's speech that the members to be added are not paid members. If they are to be paid, the Amendment would be out of Order. But as the Amendment stands there is nothing to show whether these members are to be paid.

MR. PARKER SMITH said, he could not make it clear by a numeral whether the members would be paid or unpaid. He thought he might say, however, that an Amendment which would follow would propose to add two members who might be unpaid.

MR. SPEAKER : I think it is impossible to accept the Amendment with the intention of the hon. Gentleman unexpressed. The hon. Gentleman may like to say "three paid and two unpaid."

MR. PARKER SMITH said, that if necessary he would say "three paid." But the point could be put right by an Amendment on Sub-section 2, pointing out that only certain of the appointed members should be paid, and by words providing that the additional two who were members should be unpaid.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the word "three," and insert the word "five."—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Bill."

MR. MAXWELL said, he thanked his hon. Friend for bringing forward this Amendment. His object was to add non-official members to the members of the Board as they stood at present. The subject was discussed at considerable length in the Committee upstairs, and he did not wish to take up the time of the House for long in referring to it. The question, however, was one of considerable importance. The Secretary for Scotland more than once referred to the Irish Local Government Board. One heard a reference of that kind to Dublin Castle with some suspicion, and he did not think that the circumstances of Scotland were exactly analogous, seeing that they had in Scotland a system of local government which did not exist in Ireland. They had heard references to the Local Government Board in England. There was a very marked difference between the circumstances of Scotland and England ; because, in the case of Scotland, the Secretary for Scotland was unable to be present for the greater part of the year to take a constant part in the matters which were brought before the Local Government Board. As the matter stood, the Board as constituted really divided itself into two parts—one part of which would be constantly in Edinburgh, and another portion of which would be for the great part of the year located in London. What he desired was that there should be added to the three officials who were constantly at work in the affairs of the Board two members of a representative character. He did not mean that they should undergo any form of election by anybody in Scotland, but he meant that just as the advocate represented the legal element, and the medical officer represented the medical element, so this other element should represent the Local Authorities. That was, they would be chosen from men who had spent a great part of their time in conducting Poor Law administration, or taking part in county or burgh affairs. He thought that in that way they would get a Board which would command greater confidence, and to which the Secretary for Scotland would be able to look for better advice than from a Board constituted entirely of salaried officials. In the Board of Supervision, the Lunacy Board, and the Fishery Board, there was an element of this kind. These Boards were not solely composed of official and salaried members, and he thought it was highly desirable that there should be such an element on the new Local Government Board. He did not think that by introducing two members of the description he proposed they would in any way interfere with the responsibility of the Secretary for Scotland to Parliament for the management of local affairs, because an Amendment was introduced into the Bill which made it quite clear that the new Local Board was to conform to any Orders issued by the Secretary for Scotland. The nominated members of that Board would know that they were there as the advisers to the Secretary for Scotland, and he believed it would strengthen the right hon. Gentleman's hands in carrying on the affairs of the Board when he knew he had men of practical experience to consult and appeal to in matters of difficulty.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he was glad to learn that the hon. Member was not going to oppose a medical officer being on the Board. He hoped hon. Members who originally voted against the medical officer would not be offended when he said that if this was not the most widely popular proposal in the Bill, it was the most intensely popular in certain circles, and had given very great satisfaction to the medical profession not only in Scotland, but all over the country. He was afraid he must, for reasons he had given in the House on the Second Reading, oppose the Amendment of his hon. Friend. The main object of the first part of the Bill was to alter the administrative relations of the Board of Supervision to Parliament and the Ministry. What the Bill intended to do was to create a Board which should be responsible to Parliament, and which should be composed of men who were bound to give either the whole of their time as in the case of two of the members, or all the time that was wanted, as in the case of the Sheriff, to public duties. His hon. Friend said that the Secretary for Scotland would have useful advisers in these two unpaid gentlemen from outside. But the Secretary for Scotland wanted to have advisers who should also be administrators, and his experience was that they could not have able continuous administrators unless they were salaried, and unless they were bound to give their whole time. His experience was that unpaid members attended occasionally and fitfully, and they did not follow out the proceedings of the Department in the manner that was done by those who were bound to give their whole time. They had had enough of this system on the Board of Supervision, and he believed the people of Scotland really wished to see it altered. He therefore could not accept the Amendment.

*Captain HOPE (Linlithgow) said, he was quite unable to follow the difficulty of the Secretary for Scotland in accepting the Amendment of his hon. Friend opposite. If he could have had an opportunity of moving an Amendment of his own, it would have been to very considerably alter the constitution of the Board by making it a strong and an influential Board, such as would command the respect of the Local Bodies in Scotland to a greater extent than the Board of Supervision did at present. It appeared to him that the omissions from the existing Board that were now proposed in the Bill were all in the direction of weakening the Board, and making it a less useful Board than it would have been even if left as it was. The Secretary for Scotland expressed great pleasure at the delight he had given to the medical profession by placing a medical officer on the Board. He had no objection to a medical man being put on the Board if he was suited for the work he had to perform. But he objected to a medical man being selected as a medical man instead of being selected purely for his knowledge of the administrative work which the Board would have to carry out. He looked upon the new Board not only as a weak Board, but as one which would be entirely dominated from London; and he did not think those hon. Gentlemen opposite who advocated Home Rule for Scotland would deny that a London-dominated Board to manage the affairs of Scotland would be the most unpopular Board with the people of that country. The proposal of his hon. Friend to add two members to the Board who had practical experience in the administration of local affairs would strengthen the Board in the direction in which he wished to see it strengthened. He hoped the Government might even yet be induced to see that the proposal of his hon. Friend would be an improvement of their scheme.

Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) thought this was perhaps the most important part of the Bill. It was proposed to replace the Board of Supervision by a new Local Government Board. The Board of Supervision had done its work remarkably well in the past, and he only hoped the new Board would do its work as well. He did not think the composition of the new Board was such as to give entire confidence to the people of Scotland. There was nobody on that Board who had a thorough acquaintance with local government in Scotland. The professional element was absolutely predominant on the Board, which he thought was a very unfortunate arrangement, and not likely to lead to the benefit of the public.

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS (LONDON) BILL. (No. 243.)

CONSIDERATION.

Order for resuming Further Proceedings on consideration, as amended, read.

Colonel HUGHES said, he preferred rather than lose the Bill to accept the Amendment which the opponents desired to put in. He assented to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Peckham (Mr. Banbury). He (Colonel Hughes) had spoken on the matter to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board and other Members on the other side of the House, who agreed that it was better to take the Bill in an amended form than abandon it altogether.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 25, after the words "to be served," to "leave out to end of sub section, and insert—

"No Order so made shall be of any validity unless the same has been confirmed by Act of Parliament; and it shall be lawful for the Local Government Board, as soon as conveniently may be, to obtain such confirmation; and the Act confirming such Order shall be deemed to be a Public General Act of Parliament."—(*Mr. Banbury.*)

Mr. ASQUITH said, he could not accept the Amendment.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order be discharged, and the Bill withdrawn."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

Motion agreed to.

Order discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 307.)

As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

NAUTICAL ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 312.)

Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 317.)

Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

CONVENTION OF ROYAL BURGHS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL. (No. 339.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (CONTINUATION SCHOOLS) BILL.—(No. 293.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Tenth Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

ELECTIONS (SECOND BALLOT AND RETURNING OFFICERS EXPENSES) BILL.

On the Motion of Mr. Holland, Bill providing for a Second Ballot in cases where no candidate has received a majority of the recorded votes, and for the payment of Returning Officers' Expenses out of the rates, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Holland, Sir Charles Dilke, Sir James Kitson, Mr. Schwann, and Mr. Channing.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 352.]

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

Equalisation of Rates Bill.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, it might be for the convenience of the House if he stated that the Report stage of the Equalisation of Rates Bill would be taken on Friday instead of Monday.

Mr. BARTLEY said, he was afraid that the change would be inconvenient to many Members who had left the House on the understanding that the Bill would be taken on Monday. There would, besides, be no time to consider clauses and Amendments which had not yet been circulated.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he hoped to see the clauses and Amendments in the hands of hon. Members to-morrow evening.

In answer to Mr. Tomlinson,

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. T. E. Ellis, Merionethshire) said, it would be decided to-morrow whether the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill would be taken before or after the Report stage of the Equalisation of Rates Bill.

Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 9th August 1894.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) (RIVER LEE, &c.) BILL (*by Order*).

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

The PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.) said, he had to move the Amendments standing in his name. They were the result of a very careful examination which had been given to the subject by representatives of the conflicting interests concerned, who on Tuesday last met at the Board of Trade. The Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament to whom the Bill was referred did not accept the proposals of the Board of Trade, and inserted a table of tolls that continued the toll-taking powers possessed by the Navigation. After a great deal of discussion between the representatives of the opposing interests, a compromise, embodied in the Amendments on the Paper, was arrived at. This compromise represented, he thought, the best that could be done under the circumstances; and as the assent of all parties had been obtained, he trusted the Amendments might be accepted by the House without further question.

Amendments proposed,

Page 14, after line 5, insert—

(Fraction of a mile.)

"(ii) For a fraction of the first mile the trustees may charge as for a mile, and for a fraction of a mile after the first mile the trustees may charge according to the number of quarters of a mile in that fraction, and a fraction of a quarter of a mile may be charged for as a quarter of a mile."

Page 14, line 6, leave out "(ii.)," and insert "(iii.)."

Page 14, line 11, leave out "(iii.)," and insert "(iv.)."

Page 14, leave out Table A, Part 1, and insert—

TABLE A.

Part 1.—Maximum Tolls and Wharfage Charges.

Scale 1.—Applicable to Merchandise conveyed on any part of the River Weaver (including the Weston Canal), except merchandise conveyed on the Weston Canal and not passing to or from the River Weaver.

In respect of Merchandise comprised in the under-mentioned Classes.	Maximum Tolls.		Maximum Wharfage Charges.	
	For the first 10 miles, or any part of such Distance.	For the remainder of the Distance.		
	Per ton per mile. *d.*	Per ton per mile. *d.*	Per ton. *d.*	
A	0·45	0·25	1·50	A
B	0·70	0·35	1·50	B
C (except salt).	0·85	0·50	3	C (except salt).
1			3	1
2			4	2
3			4	3
4			4	4
5			4	5

The maximum toll for white salt shall be ten pence, and for rock salt five pence, per ton for the whole or any part of the distance on the canal, and the maximum wharfage charges for salt shall be one penny halfpenny per ton.

Page 15, leave out the whole of the page, and insert,—

Scale 2.—Applicable to Merchandise conveyed on the Weston Canal and not passing to or from the River Weaver.

In respect of Merchandise comprised in the under-mentioned Classes.	Maximum Tolls.	Maximum Wharfage Charges.	
	For the whole Distance or any part thereof.		
	Per ton. *d.*	Per ton. *d.*	
A	2·00	1·50	A
B (except salt).			B (except salt).
For salt.	6·00	—	For salt.
C	2·00	3	C
1		3	1
2		4	2
3		4	3
4		4	4
5		4	5

Provided that notwithstanding anything in Scale 1, the maximum toll for chertstone, clay (china, blue, black, and ball), china, stone, flints, and felspar, to be used as potters' raw materials, shall in no case exceed eight pence per ton.

Provided that notwithstanding anything in Scale 2, the maximum toll for brick, cinders, sandstone, and other stone or lime conveyed on the Weston Canal, and not passing to or from the River Weaver, shall not exceed one halfpenny per ton, nor that for coal so conveyed one penny per ton.

Provided also that, notwithstanding anything in Table A, the tolls and charges payable on any merchandise conveyed in a boat between the works of the same owner on the canal, and not passing through a lock, shall not exceed for the whole distance five pence per ton in the case of rock salt, and sixpence per ton in the case of all other merchandise.

Provided also that, notwithstanding anything in this Schedule, no tolls and charges shall be payable in respect of any empty bags, barrels, or cases conveyed in a boat on the canal for the purpose of being filled at the works of any trader or bye-trader with merchandise on which tolls are subsequently paid."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Amendments agreed to.

*MR. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich) said, he had to move the following Proviso:—

> "Provided always, that the tolls from time to time actually charged shall not exceed such amount as may, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, be sufficient to provide for the reasonable expenses of adequately maintaining the navigation in the interests of the traders thereon."

He did not intend to press the Amendment provided he could get from the President of the Board of Trade an expression of sympathy with its object. As the House was aware, the land in the valley of the Weaver was subject to subsidences, and the small property owners had suffered great hardships. The trade of the Valley had been taxed to an enormous extent for the benefit of the County of Chester, the county having, in fact, received from the surplus funds of the Navigation no less than £1,000,000. Appeal after appeal had been made to the trustees for some compensation to the small property owners, but those appeals had always been met with a very decided refusal. He now asked that when the Weaver Trustees came to Parliament next year, as they were bound to do under an Instruction of the House of Commons embodied in an Act of last year, the President of the Board of Trade would take into his full consideration the various Reports that had been made by his Department on the constitution and management of the Weaver Navigation. The first Report, he found, was issued in 1872, and signed by Sir Thomas Farrer. The Board of Trade informed Parliament at that time that the constitution of the trustees was very peculiar; that their Acts left them at liberty either to expend their surplus income on new works or not; that they were not bound to have a surplus, but that if they had a surplus it must go to the County of Chester; that the Trust had been from the beginning a Public Trust; and that the tax was one of the same character as local charges on shipping, which had in so many cases been condemned by Parliament. The last sentence of the Report was as follows:—

> "Under these circumstances it seems to deserve consideration whether the practice pursued by Parliament in similar cases should not be pursued in this case, and whether an endeavour should not be made to effect some arrangement by which, without too hastily depriving Cheshire of an income which it has so long en-

joyed, the trade may ultimately be freed from this anomalous and ever-increasing burden."

He thought that if an arrangement carrying out this suggestion were made next Session it could not be said that Cheshire had been too hastily deprived of its income. The House might know that in 1866 a cattle plague rate was imposed on Cheshire. The Cheshire landowners of that date asked that this rate should be made a national one, but Parliament decided that inasmuch as Cheshire was in receipt of the surplus funds of the Weaver Navigation, Cheshire should pay the rate itself. The subsiding district of Cheshire had been paying this rate in common with the rest of the county, and in addition this tax had been got out of the very bowels of this unfortunate district. The cattle plague rate came to an end in 1896, and it seemed to him that if the surplus funds of the Weaver Navigation, under authority and command of Parliament, were thereupon used for the benefit of the trade, and not for the benefit of the county, no ratepayer in Cheshire would feel the burden of any result from the change. Parliament would therefore, to his mind, have an additional reason for the action which he hoped would be taken, and he begged that at any rate the President of the Board of Trade would give him a sympathetic answer. He moved the Proviso.

Amendment proposed, in page 49, line 23, at the end of the Schedule, to add the words—

> "Provided always, that the tolls from time to time actually charged shall not exceed such amount as may, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, be sufficient to provide for the reasonable expenses of adequately maintaining the navigation in the interests of the traders thereon."—(*Mr. Brunner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. TOLLEMACHE (Cheshire, Eddisbury) said, he opposed the Amendment not only as a trustee of the River Weaver, but as representing all the different parties who assembled at the Conference at the Board of Trade on Tuesday last, and who entered into what he understood was an honourable compromise, which should be faithfully maintained. There were a number of conflicting interests represented there, including the Weaver Trustees, traders on the river, the County Council, and the Board of Trade. They had a very exhaustive discussion, and certain suggestions made by the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade were accepted by everyone who was present, including the hon. Member (Mr. Brunner). The hon. Member in moving the Amendment did not speak for the traders of the districts, who were perfectly in accord with him and others in saying that the arrangement come to in an honourable and amicable way on Tuesday ought not to be upset at the present moment. He had a letter from the President of the Salt Union authorising him to say that he was no party to this attempt to upset that arrangement. As to the extracts which the hon. Gentleman had read, and the well-known animus which he bore towards the Trustees of the River Weaver, he might say that this was not an occasion when any notice should be taken of this matter. The whole question would come up next year of the reconstruction of the Trust, and it would then be perfectly competent for the hon. Member to move any Amendment he thought fit. He understood that the hon. Member, if he could get a sympathetic answer from the President of the Board of Trade, would not press his Amendment to a Division. But if the hon. Member got an unsympathetic answer, and if he were assured of a majority in the House, he wondered if the hon. Member would then press his Amendment.

Mr. BRUNNER: I certainly should not.

Mr. TOLLEMACHE thought that in that case they had been brought there under somewhat false pretences. The hon. Gentleman had appealed for a sympathetic answer. He would also make an appeal to the President of the Board of Trade, and would urge upon him that the friendly arrangement come to at his Department was quite sufficient for all practical purposes. The hon. Member sought to prejudice the position of one of the parties to this discussion by getting some answer from the President of the Board of Trade which might be used against them when the whole question came on for discussion. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to consider this point: that the whole knotty question was to be considered next year, and it would be rather inexpedient to put one of the parties in an unfavourable position by any statement which he was asked to make.

Mr. BRYCE thought there was some little misunderstanding between the parties in regard to this matter. The parties concerned met at the Board of Trade Office on Tuesday, and after a full discussion, which lasted for three hours, entered into a compromise which was embodied in his Amendments. It was part of that compromise that the question now raised should not be raised. [**Mr. Brunner** : No, no.] He was sure his hon. Friend, who was as anxious to abide by an honourable arrangement as any Member of the House could possibly be, would not seek to elicit any statement from him (Mr. Bryce) if he thought it was inconsistent with that arrangement, but the view of the Board of Trade officials who took part in the conference was that all that should take place in the House was to be embodied in the Amendments he had moved, and that he should express no opinion on the question raised by his hon. Friend, which was no doubt a question of considerable gravity and importance. Under these circumstances, he was not able to give his hon. Friend either a sympathetic or an unsympathetic answer. He could not enter into the points which he had raised, and which were very fit for discussion in the House or in the Committee to whom the Bill to be brought in next year would be referred. All he could say was that when the Bill was introduced next year it would probably be the duty of the Board of Trade—it would certainly be in accordance with the usual practice—to report on the Bill as regarded the application of the dues and tolls received by the Weaver Navigation, and the surplus of which now went to the county. And although he could not undertake at this stage to say what the nature of that Report would be, he thought he might safely say that it would be the duty of the Board of Trade to include in it references to the Reports made in 1893 and 1872. The House would therefore, when the Bill came before it, be in possession of the views of the Board on Trade on the subject. In these circumstances, he appealed to his hon. Friend not to press his Amendment.

Mr. BRUNNER, in asking leave to withdraw his Amendment, said the compromise which was come to last Tuesday did not come in the first place from representatives of the Board of Trade, but from him, on behalf of his firm. He was very glad to hear from the hon. Member opposite and the President of the Board of Trade that the question would come up next year. That had not been clear to him before, and he was quite satisfied now that he knew the question of the destination of the surplus would come up.

Mr. TOLLEMACHE : What I said was that when the question comes up it will be open to the hon. Member to raise any point as to the distribution of the surplus. I am not to be understood as expressing any opinion on the matter.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

QUESTIONS.

THE WESTMEATH REGISTRY.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that it has been decided by the Lord Chief Baron, in a decision at the King's County Assizes at Tullamore some years ago, that contracts for the printing of the Parliamentary Registries should be entered into at Presentment Sessions and precisely in the same way as other Grand Jury contracts; whether he is aware that the Clerk of the Peace of the County of Westmeath has ignored the law on this matter and taken tenders privately in his own office for the registry printing for Westmeath; and whether in view of the complaints made in the County for Meath of a partizan printer tampering with the list of voters sent to him to be printed, he will direct the Clerk of the Peace for Westmeath to comply with the law in future contracts for the printing of the Westmeath Registry?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) : The Clerk of the Peace of Westmeath informs me he is not aware of any such decision of the Lord

Chief Baron as is referred to in the first paragraph. At the Spring Assizes of 1886 the Grand Jury passed a resolution to the effect that the printing of the Parliamentary Voters' Lists should be advertised by the Clerk of the Peace, tenders called for, and the lowest tender accepted. In conformity with this resolution the Clerk of the Peace has since advertised for tenders in all the local newspapers of every shade of politics, and has accepted the lowest tender, the result being that he has seldom had the same printer for two successive years. He has not taken tenders privately in his office for the printing for the county.

ST. EDWARD'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, ROMFORD.

SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been directed to the case of St. Edward's National School, Romford; whether, although in the year 1891 the infant school was enlarged to double its former capacity and otherwise improved, in obedience to the request of the Education Department, further structural alterations in the schools are now insisted upon; whether it is intended to insist on the immediate execution of these alterations in an existing school; and whether it is further intended to insist on the extension of the playground, which is situate in a lane off the main road, and is surrounded on all sides but one by house property?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): It is the case that the infants' school here was enlarged in 1891. Her Majesty's Inspector had reported in the previous year that the noisiness and general inferiority of the premises of the whole school rendered satisfactory organisation difficult, and involved an excessive strain on the teachers. He again commented strongly on the unsatisfactory character of the premises for the older children, both boys and girls, in 1891, 1892, and 1893; and the managers were warned by the Department last February that certain alterations must be carried out during this year, or the grant might be endangered. I do not find that any requirement whatever has been made as to the playground.

SIR F. S. POWELL: When does the year terminate?

MR. ACLAND: I cannot say, but I will inquire.

ULVERSTON NATIONAL SCHOOL.

SIR F. S. POWELL: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he intends to insist on the immediate construction, at a time of severe depression of the local trade, of a new building for the infant school at the national school at Ulverston, Lancashire, where the school has obtained the highest grant for the last four years?

MR. ACLAND: Her Majesty's Inspector reported last January that the hall used as an infants' school was quite unsuited for its purpose, besides having no proper class-room or cloak-room, and added that the managers were quite prepared to acquiesce in its condemnation. The managers were informed that the annual grant to the infants' school, after that due on 31st December next, would be conditional on satisfactory progress being made towards providing suitable premises. Plans have now been submitted and approved for a new infants' school, and the hon. Baronet will observe that the managers have still nearly a year and a-half before them in which to make satisfactory progress towards the building. I do not think that there is unreasonable pressure in this case.

RIFLE RANGES FOR METROPOLITAN VOLUNTEERS.

COLONEL H. VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state how many ranges there are within a reasonable distance of the Metropolis certificated for the compulsory class firing of the 30,000 Volunteer troops in London; and if shooting at an uncertificated range is practically forbidden, as in the case of the Staines range, whereby the expenditure of £32,000 by patriotic individuals, with the encouragement of his predecessor, has been rendered useless and unremunerative?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): There are 14 ranges within a reasonable distance of the Metropolis used by London Volunteer corps. Ranges are not certified for class-firing specially, but with reference to their safety for the purposes for which they are required. When a range is declared to be unsafe the use of it is practically forbidden. I have no knowledge of the amount of the expenditure incurred by the private company to which the Staines Range belongs.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Staines Range was established under the direct encouragement of his predecessor?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I believe the War Office would encourage almost any range being established, but that does not relieve us of any responsibility for what may happen hereafter.

WORKMEN'S RAILWAY TICKETS.

Mr. DODD (Essex, Maldon): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board of Trade can furnish, if asked for, a Return showing the extent to which the practice of imposing as a condition upon tickets, issued by Railway Companies at cheap rates to workmen, the term that the Company shall be under no liability if the workmen travelling with such tickets are injured or killed on the journey by the negligence of the Railway Company, exists or has during the last year existed, or furnish any information to that effect or in regard to such practice; and if he has made any inquiries upon that subject?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): The Board of Trade some weeks ago communicated with some of the leading Railway Companies on this subject, and as soon as replies have been received from all of these Companies the correspondence shall be presented to Parliament.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY SIGNALMEN.

Mr. DODD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what has now been the result of the action of the Board of Trade in regard to the hours of labour at certain signal boxes complained of upon the London to Ipswich line of the Great Eastern Railway Company; and whether the Board will be able before Parliament rises to present its Report upon the working of the recent Railway Servants (Hours of Labour) Act?

Mr. BRYCE: The Railway Company have not further reduced the hours of the signalmen in question, and the Board of Trade have still under their consideration the expediency of taking proceedings against the Company before the Railway and Canal Commissioners. The Board are, however, investigating other complaints against this Company in regard to their signalmen, porters, ticket collectors, shunters, and platelayers on certain sections of the line, and, as at present advised, the Board are of opinion that all these cases should finally be dealt with at the same time. A year has only just elapsed since the Act came into force, but a Report is being prepared and will be presented as soon as possible.

POSTAL CARD REFORM.

Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he can arrange for the supply of postal cards to which halfpenny stamps may be affixed as desired by men of business with a large correspondence?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): I am glad to be able to state that I have made arrangements under which private cards with a halfpenny stamp affixed will be accepted as postcards for inland postage. The necessary Regulation on the subject will be issued almost immediately. It is not intended that the Post Office should supply such unstamped cards.

VOLUNTEER CAPITATION GRANT.

Sir H. FLETCHER (Sussex, Lewes): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is prepared to recommend that the War Office Authorities should pay to Commanding Officers of Volunteer corps 25 per cent. of the Capitation Grant as soon as possible after the end of each financial year?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. I have carefully inquired into the matter, and regret to say I find I cannot adopt the course suggested in the question.

FLOODS NEAR LOUGH KEY.

Mr. TULLY (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that 600 acres of land are flooded in the neighbourhood of

Lough Key, owing to the high level at which the Knockvicar Lough is kept at the outlet of the lake into the Shannon; whether this flooding could be prevented by constructing a regulating sluice at Knockvicar, as is in use on other portions of the Shannon and its tributaries; and whether he will recommend that the Board of Works take steps to have such a sluice erected at Knockvicar Lough?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): Further inquiry since my reply of the 26th ultimo to my hon. Friend's previous question has brought to light no report of flooding round Lough Key, and I am therefore unable to add to what I stated in my previous answer.

THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.

MR. TULLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Congested Districts Board has been drawn to the letter published by Mr. George L. Tottenham, D.L., J.P., Glenade, County Leitrim, in the *Irish Times* and *Daily Independent*, of Tuesday last, in which he makes a number of charges against their administration of the funds under their control; that on the exposed portion of the Atlantic coast, where tree planting experiments have been generally failures, a sum of £4,023 has been spent on 290 acres of bog, at a cost of £14 per acre, the estimate being £4 10s. per acre; that £6,533 was spent on local inquiries and inspections, which Mr. Tottenham alleges could be done for £300 at the outside; that £400 was granted for a co-operative creamery outside the scheduled congested area; and whether he will order an inquiry into Mr. Tottenham's charges, and state at the same time the reason why the Congested Districts Board, while making these expenditures, neglected to extend their operations to the congested districts in Roscommon, a county specially entitled to the benefit of the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund, and to the congested districts of Leitrim, which county is specially entitled to the benefits of the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund and the Sea Coast Fisheries Fund?

MR. J. MORLEY: The letter referred to in my hon. Friend's question will be brought before the Congested Districts Board at their next meeting. Under these circumstances, it is not considered desirable at present to offer any criticisms on some of the statements in the letter.

LIGHTS ON THE CYPRUS COAST.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the Report on Cyprus recently issued (page 49) by District Commissioner at Famagusta relative to the Lights on the Island, in which the Commissioner states that an additional light is sorely needed at Cape Andrea, the northernmost point in the island, and he hoped before long ships will be provided with this means of protection from this exposed and dangerous spot; and whether any steps have been taken to supply the deficiency complained of?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): My attention has been called to the paragraph. The question is one of expense; but I may state that if and when money is available for building another light, other places would have to be considered as well as Cape Andrea.

ADMIRAL FIELD: Does the hon. Gentleman mean other places in Cyprus or in the British Empire?

MR. S. BUXTON: Other places in the island. At present, however, no money is available.

ADMIRAL FIELD: The hon. Gentleman cannot have read the Report, or he would have known that it only emphasises the necessity of a lighthouse at this particular point.

THE POSTMASTERSHIP OF STONEYFORD, KILKENNY.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is proposed to remove the present postmaster, Mr. Robert Giltrap, of Stoneyford, County Kilkenny, who recently purchased the business premises of the late postmaster, where the post-office has been carried on for years; whether he has, during the four months he has held the position of postmaster, given entire satisfaction to the Government officials and to those residing in the district; why no cause has been assigned for the proposed removal of Mr. Giltrap and substitution of Mr. Byrne; whether Mr. Byrne has any knowledge of the business of a postmaster, either in the post or telegraphic departments; and is he aware that Mr. Giltrap is a Protestant and Mr. Byrne a Roman Catholic?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I will answer this question. Mr. Robert Giltrap purchased the premises of the late sub-postmaster of Stoneyford, County Kilkenny, and his wife was permitted to act as sub-postmistress pending the appointment of a successor. During this period— a period of about four months—the duties appear to have been discharged in a satisfactory manner. Mr. Giltrap has not been removed as implied in the question, because he was never appointed. Both he and Mr. Byrne were candidates for the situation, and I appointed Mr. Byrne. Neither of them, so far as is known, possessed any previous knowledge of Post Office duties, either postal or telegraphic. Of the religious opinions of the two candidates I am totally ignorant.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD OFFICIALS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) if he is aware that of those officials of the Local Government Board, Ireland, appointed otherwise than by competitive examination, 21 are Protestants and only seven Roman Catholics; and (2) what is the proportion of Protestants to Catholics in the population of Ireland?

Mr. J. MORLEY: (1) The Local Government Board have no official knowledge of the religious denominations to which members of their staff belong; but, as far as they are aware, the statement in the first paragraph is correct. (2) According to the Report of the Census of 1891 Roman Catholics then constituted 75·4 per cent. of the population of Ireland.

EJECTMENTS IN IRELAND.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the total number of ejectments in Ireland from the passing of The Land Act, 1881, to the passing of The Land Act, 1887, and the total number since that date, to the present time?

Mr. J. MORLEY: There were 24,400 evictions from October 1, 1881, to September 30, 1887, and 8,975 evictions from October 1, 1887, to June 30, 1894.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Notices of evictions?

Mr. J. MORLEY: No; evictions. The Eviction Returns are prepared quarterly, and it would be a matter of much difficulty to give the exact figures for periods which include broken quarters. The periods mentioned by me, however, approximate closely to those indicated in the question.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Do the figures 8,975 include services by registered letter, or do they only refer to actual dispossession by the Magistrates?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I take it the word "evicted" does not include service by registered letter.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): On the Second Reading of the Evicted Tenants Bill the right hon. Gentleman gave the number as 7,000 or 8,000.

Mr. J. MORLEY: Whatever number I gave I have no doubt was correct.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): Under the Evicted Tenants Bill 3,900 evictions are to be dealt with. Can the right hon. Gentleman explain what has become of the difference between that number and the total of 32,000 evicted between 1887 and 1894? If not, will he give a Return showing what has become of them, and the number still to be dealt with?

Mr. J. MORLEY: It would be impossible to trace the fortunes of every evicted Irish tenant. A great many have been reinstated, and others may be accounted for in different ways. In many instances the evicted tenants have disposed of the interest in their holdings, and some 2,000 have gone into other callings. I will inquire if it is possible to give the Return asked for.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: But even if the evictions were formal, the tenancies in all cases were equally broken?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am afraid that that is so.

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is there anything to prevent this large number claiming under the Evicted Tenants Bill?

MR. J. MORLEY: That depends on the circumstances of each particular case.

MR. BARTLEY: Then there is nothing to prevent 26,000 or 27,000 more tenants claiming compensation under the Bill?

MR. J. MORLEY: I think not; but each case will have to be determined upon its merits.

SALES OF LANDED ESTATES IN IRELAND.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland can he state the total value of the land sold in Ireland, to date, in the Landed Estate Court and the Encumbered Estates Court?

MR. J. MORLEY: The total value of land sold in Ireland in the Landed Estates Court and Encumbered Estates Court from November, 1849, to July 30, 1894, is, I am informed, £56,119,192.

KILBRIDE RIFLE RANGE.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War do the Government intend to establish a range for the new rifle at Kilbride, County Dublin; are they in treaty with Mr. Fletcher Moore, J.P., for the manor of Kilbride; and what is the present state of the negotiations?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is in contemplation to establish a rifle range at Kilbride. Negotiations were entered into with Mr. Fletcher Moore for the acquisition of land for the purpose, but no agreement has been arrived at.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As this question is one which affects the owners of surrounding property, and as the late Government were good enough to recede from their intention to establish a rifle range in the neighbourhood of Sutton, will an opportunity be given to the inhabitants—both landlords and tenants—in the surrounding area to make representations before a final determination is arrived at by the War Department?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think anyone having property within the zone of danger would be precluded from entering a protest.

MR. T. M. HEALY: "Protest" is rather a short word. I want them to have an opportunity of making representations to the War Office before a final decision is arrived at.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I will see if it is possible.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): Will a public inquiry be held in this case?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think so.

MR. CLANCY: There have been public inquiries in similar cases; why not in this?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is no use in having an inquiry until we have discovered if the landlord of the property will sell.

THROUGH RAILWAY RATES.

MR. CLANCY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Railway Commissioners have power to compel Companies to give a through rate; and whether they will make the North Eastern Company comply with the law in this respect?

MR. BRYCE: If the hon. Member will refer to Section 25 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888, he will find that the Commissioners have power to compel Railway Companies to give through rates if the terms of that section are complied with. I have no doubt that the Commissioners would give due attention to any complaint brought before them in terms of the section and do justice in the premises.

RAILWAY CONSIGNMENT NOTES.

MR. CLANCY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick's Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Railway Commissioners can prevent the Railway Companies issuing consignment notes which contract them out of all liability for delay, damage, or destruction; and whether he will inquire into those points with reference to Irish railways?

MR. BRYCE: I am not aware that the Railway Commissioners have any jurisdiction in this matter. The question of the reasonableness of conditions is one for the ordinary Courts of Law, and they are fully competent to deal with any case in which this point arises. I do not, therefore, see, as at present advised, that an inquiry by the Board of Trade would serve any useful purpose.

ALLEGED OUTRAGE ON BRITISH INDIANS IN MADAGASCAR.

Mr. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he would cause inquiry to be made as to an alleged unprovoked attack by M. Suberbie, a French holder of a concession from the Government of Madagascar, upon British Indian subjects, the result of which was the seizure of their persons, trading canoe, and property, including 200 ounces of gold dust; and whether M. Suberbie's men fired on the British Indians when in their canoe, with the British flag flying?

***The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The Acting Consul reports that he is in communication with the French Resident General respecting the statement of a British Indian, made in November last, that his canoe had been stopped, and that he had been detained and searched for gold dust by Hova Authorities at M. Suberbie's instigation. The declaration of the British Indian makes no mention of firing upon the canoe, and states that no gold dust was found, and the canoe and property were restored with the exception of one box containing a small sum of money which was missing. We are waiting to receive the explanation from the French Resident General.

Mr. NAOROJI: That answer refers to an entirely different case. Will the hon. Baronet further inquire?

Sir E. GREY: If the hon. Member can give me any information I will inquire into it.

PHŒNIX PARK CONSTABULARY DEPÔT.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if, of the seven depôt officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary residing in the Phœnix Park—namely, the Commandant, the Adjutant, and five District Inspectors, only one (a District Inspector) is an Irishman and a Catholic, all the others being Englishmen and Protestants; and whether these seven form the disciplinary officers of the depôt?

Mr. J. MORLEY: There are 12 officers permanently stationed at the Constabulary depôt; of these, I am told, eight are Protestants and four Roman Catholics, six are Englishmen and six Irishmen. All these officers are disciplinary officers in their several departments.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): May I ask whether these interrogatories are likely to advance the cause of Home Rule in Ireland?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: They are likely to get fair play for the Catholics, at any rate.

PIGEON HOUSE FORT, DUBLIN.

Mr. ROSS (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any agreement has been entered into with the Corporation of Dublin for the purchase of the Pigeon House Fort, or whether any negotiations in relation thereto are pending; and whether there is any statutory power authorising the application of the rates for such a purpose?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No agreement has been entered into with the Corporation of Dublin for the purchase of Pigeon House Fort, but negotiations on the subject are being carried on. I am unable to answer the second question, which seems rather to be a question for the Corporation and the ratepayers.

Mr. ROSS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the object of the Corporation of Dublin in trying to secure possession of Pigeon House Fort is to enable them to carry out a most extensive scheme of drainage which the residents of Dublin strongly object to?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: My information is that the Corporation are promoting an elaborate scheme of drainage, which, so far as I can judge, deserves the support of the inhabitants, if I may be allowed to express an opinion, and I am disposed to give all the assistance in my power.

Mr. ROSS: Will the right hon. Gentleman consult his Legal Advisers as to whether there is power to apply the rates in this particular way?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is not my affair; it is the affair of the Corporation.

THE NILE RESERVOIRS.

MR. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham): On behalf of the hon. Member for Warrington, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to make any communication to this House, before the close of the Session, on the subject of Nile reservoirs; and whether the proposal to make a reservoir dam at Philæ has been approved by Her Majesty's Government?

*SIR E. GREY: The question of the Nile reservoirs, which is one of great difficulty, is still under the consideration of the Egyptian Government, and no decision is likely to be arrived at for a considerable time. Her Majesty's Government have forwarded for consideration the various representations which have been made to them upon the subject, but have not themselves expressed any opinion on the several proposals.

SALES OF CHARITY LANDS IN ESSEX.

MR. DODD: I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether he is aware that at Hatfield Peverel, Essex, and at Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, meetings of the inhabitants have been held protesting against proposed sales of charity lands in those places; whether the Charity Commissioners will withhold their consent to such sales, at any rate, until after the new Local Government Act comes into operation; and if the Commissioners will consider the propriety of refusing as a rule their consent to sales of charity lands pending the coming into operation of that Act, and pending the consideration by this House of the Report of the recent Committee upon the Charity Commission and of the suggestions therein?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON, Suffolk, Eye): At Walton-on-the-Naze the sanction of the Charity Commissioners to the proposed sale of charity lands has already been suspended until the Local Government Act, 1894, comes into operation. In the case of Hatfield Peverel, Essex, notice of the proposed sale of charity lands is still running. The Commissioners have resolved that, pending the appointment of new Trustees, by or in pursuance of the Local Government Act, 1894, no sale of land of a charity be authorised by the Board in a rural parish, except in a case of special urgency in the interest of the charity.

THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what number or amount of debentures or Debenture Stock have been issued by the British South Africa Company, and on what terms and under what powers they have been issued; whether there is any limit to the amount which may be issued by the Company; and whether all or any of the debentures or Debenture Stock would have priority over the charge purported to be given by the Company over the revenues of their territory by the contract with the Bechuanaland Railway Company?

MR. S. BUXTON: The British South Africa Company has power, under its Charter, to issue debentures to the extent of one-half of its share capital. Under that power it has created £750,000 Six per cent. Debentures, of which about £650,000 have been issued up to date. None of these debentures have priority over the railway subsidy charge given by the Company over certain of the sources of revenue of their territory under the Bechuanaland Railway Contract.

MR. KNOX: Were the debentures issued at par?

MR. S. BUXTON: That I cannot say.

THE BECHUANALAND RAILWAY CONTRACT.

MR. KNOX: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether any Treasury Minute has been made approving of the terms of the contract relating to the Bechuanaland Railway which has been laid before the House; and whether the House will have an opportunty of discussing this question before the Minute is made?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The Treasury Minute has been prepared, and I am today laying a copy on the Table. The contract, however, will not be binding until 30 days after the 3rd August, the day on which it was presented to Parliament.

DONEGAL VOTERS' LIST.

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain why the lists of Parliamentary voters were not posted outside the police barrack at Carrick, County Donegal, this year, as has been the invariable practice every year since The Franchise Act, 1885, came into operation; is it the duty of the Constabulary to have these lists hung outside the barrack; and, if so, who is responsible for the neglect; and did the Clerk of the Peace give instructions this year to the Constabulary to have the lists posted outside the barracks for 14 days from the 21st of July, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.; and, if so, why were his instructions disregarded?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am informed by the police that the Clerk of the Peace gave instructions that the lists should be posted at the barrack for the prescribed time and during the prescribed hours, and that the sergeant to whom these instructions were sent did not understand them as meaning that the lists should be posted outside the barrack. He states indeed, that owing to the wind and rain the lists could not be posted outside. I shall make further inquiry in the matter.

KILLUCAN MEDICAL OFFICER.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for North Westmeath, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury can he state the grounds on which the Commissioners of Public Works in Ireland continue to withhold their sanction to a loan for the erection of a dispensary and residence for the medical officer at Killucan, in the County of Westmeath, the Local Government Board for Ireland having already signified their approval of the undertaking; and whether, as this proposed loan has been now over 12 months under the consideration of the Commissioners of Works, a decision will soon be arrived at?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I am informed that the first application from the Guardians was received on the 14th of September, 1893, and the Board of Works replied on the 18th of September asking for the deposit of the lease, plans, &c.; but, though several reminders were sent to the Guardians, the proper documents were not received till the 25th May last. The plans, being found defective, were returned on the 18th of June, and the corrected specification was received on the 3rd instant, and is now being examined. The approval of the Local Government Board will be required for the altered plan before the loan can be sanctioned.

THE IRISH LANGUAGE IN IRISH SCHOOLS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in Galway and other towns in the West of Ireland shop assistants are required to know Irish as well as English owing to many of the customers speaking Irish only; and whether, in view of this fact, an arrangement could be made to enable children in these districts to receive instruction through the medium of their native tongue during a certain period of each school day?

MR. J. MORLEY: In every national school in Ireland the following Regulation of the Commissioners is suspended for the guidance of managers and teachers:—

> "If there are Irish-speaking pupils in a school, the teacher, if acquainted with the Irish language, should, whenever practicable, employ the vernacular as an aid to the elucidation and acquisition of the English language."

In order to encourage teachers to instruct their pupils in Irish the result fee allowed by the Commissioners for a pass therein as an extra branch to pupils of the 5th class and above is 10s., or double the fee allowed for French.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether national school teachers in districts in the West of Ireland are required to possess any knowledge themselves of the Irish language?

MR. J. MORLEY: I do not know that it is required, but I understand that it is considered to be a desirable qualification.

RESULT FEES IN IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS.

Captain DONELAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that result fees are not allowed to Irish National School teachers in respect to pupils under the fifth class; and whether he will advise the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland to consider the desirability of extending the system of result fees to all classes?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The assertion in the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's question is not according to the fact, as result fees are paid for pupils in all classes, whether above or below fifth class.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES AT EMLY.

Mr. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when will the Local Government Board send an arbitrator to value the proposed sites for labourers' cottages in the parish of Emly, County Tipperary?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board inform me that it would be premature to apply to the Commissioners of Public Works to appoint an arbitrator to value the plots of land until after the issue of a Provisional Order confirming the scheme of the Guardians. The Report of the Inspector on the scheme was received by the Board last week, and is now under consideration.

BOOKMAKERS AT IRISH CYCLING RACES.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the restrictions on cycling in the Phœnix Park, if the presence of bookmakers is a nuisance at these races, and the cause of their being stopped; why do not the police remove the offenders and put down betting; whether a deputation of the Irish Cyclists' Association have assured the Board of Works that their Rules forbid betting, and that they severely punished offenders for such an infraction of their Rules; if so, why are their members to be deprived of a privilege because of the action of lawbreakers whom the police can cope with; and under what Statute are their sports to be curtailed?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: As already stated, in reply to my hon. and learned Friend's question of the 24th ultimo, no restrictions have been placed on ordinary cycling. The decision of the Board of Works not to give permission for races after this season was due to representations from the Commissioner of Police not only as regard the betting nuisance, but also as regards the danger to persons using the Park for ordinary purposes. The Irish Cyclists' Association have done their best to co-operate with the Board of Works in discouraging betting, but they appear to have been quite unsuccessful. I understand that the police will deal with any infraction of the law that occurs.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it intended to stop all cycling in the Park?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: The Board of Works do not intend to stop all cycling, but only racing.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON: Is there any power to arrest the law breakers?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: Yes, I believe there is such a power under the Dublin Police Act.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman state under what Statute the Board of Works proposes to exercise these powers?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I am told that if the police should be required to bring a case into Court the Acts under which it might be brought are the Dublin Police Act, the Summary Jurisdiction Act, and the Carriage Act. That is the only information given to me, and I cannot say whether it is correct.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: They have no powers except under these Acts?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I believe not.

LOANS TO IRISH TENANTS.

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Galway, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether John Meara, tenant farmer, of Derrahinny, near Portumna, County Galway, on applying last March to the Board of Works for a loan of £60 for the improvement of his holding, was required by the Board to forward a receipt showing payment of his rent to November last, and thereupon paid the rent to that date and transmitted the receipt to the Board; whether the Board then called upon him to pay the rent up to May last, a date subsequent to the time of his application, and to send them the receipt; whether, notwithstanding an explanation by the tenant that the rent had already been paid up to the latest customory period, and that the half-year owing represented the hanging-gale, the Board have declined to make the loan on the ground that the security of the tenant's interest in the land has been endangered by "dilatory observance" of the condition as to payment of rent; whether the Treasury approve of refusing a loan where the rent had been paid up to the latest customary period; and whether the Board will reconsider the case?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I am informed that Mr. John Meara's Memorial for a loan of £60 was received on the 26th of April, 1894. It appeared therefrom that rent had been paid only to November, 1892, and it was represented that a hanging-gale was allowed on the estate on which he is a tenant. As, however, Mr. Meara is a judicial tenant he was not legally entitled to any concession of this nature. On receipt of the Memorial the applicant was asked to forward a receipt for the November, 1893, gale of rent, that being, at the time, the latest period to which rent should be paid. Before this requirement was complied with the Board of Works learned from the landlord that the rent to 1st November, 1892, had not been paid till Mr. Meara had been served with ejectments, and just before his time as caretaker expired, and also that the May gale should have been paid when due, thus showing that the rent had not been paid to the latest customary period. As the Board of Works' security for a Land Law Loan is the tenant's interest in his holding it is apparent that anything that would weaken that security should enter largely into the consideration of the question whether a loan should be made. Here the tenant's rent is in arrear for 1½ years, and, in consequence, it is open to his landlord to institute proceedings for ejectment and termination of the tenant's interest.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): Would an Essex tenant have any chance of borrowing £60 if he did not pay his rent?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I do not suppose he would.

CRIME IN GALWAY.

Mr. SEXTON: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Galway, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Judge Andrews, when addressing the Grand Jury for the County of Galway, said the bills to go before them were only four of an unimportant character, and that, by the County Inspector's Report, there was no increase in the reported cases for this compared with the corresponding period last year, still there were men under police protection in the eastern division of the county, that most of those were on the Clanricarde Estate, and those under partial police protection were also on the same estate, and were it not for those cases there would be very little to complain of; whether he will state what is the annual cost for police protection on the Clanricarde Estate; and what were Mr. Tener's, agent to Lord Clanricarde, qualifications to be a member of the Grand Jury addressed by Judge Andrews?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The statements in the first paragraph of the question are substantially correct. In regard, however, to the matter of special police protection in the East Riding of the county, the Judge observed that about one-half of the number of persons receiving such protection were on the Clanricarde Estate. The Judge's remarks were as follows:—

> "There are 15 persons in the East Riding under constant police protection; nine of these are on the Clanricarde Estate. There are 27 other persons afforded police protection, of whom 14 are on the Clanricarde Estate, making 42 altogether, involving the necessity of employing no fewer than 92 members of the Constabulary."

The cost of police protection on the Clanricarde Estate last year was £2,098. With regard to the last part of the question, I presume that Mr. Tener was summoned to represent the property over which he acts as agent. My hon. Friend knows that the Executive Government have no voice or control in the matter of choosing the members of the Grand Jury. The Sheriff is at liberty to choose whomsoever he likes, provided there is one representative from each barony.

MR. KNOX: Is there any power under the Regulations of the Irish police to charge the expense for special police protection on the person protected in the same way as is done in England?

MR. J. MORLEY: If my hon. Friend will put that question down I will inquire.

MR. SEXTON: Is the charge of £2,098 a year on this one Irish estate a continuing annual charge on the Imperial Exchequer?

MR. J. MORLEY: Of course, a moiety of this £2,098 for police protection last year came out of sums voted by Parliament.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will Her Majesty's Government in their next Finance Bill consider the possibility of placing a special tax on the persons requiring protection?

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Will the Government also consider the expediency of putting a tax on those who cause the disturbance and expenditure?

MR. ROSS: Having regard to the threats uttered in this House during the past few days, will the Chief Secretary give an assurance that he will not relax this police protection?

MR. J. MORLEY: I think, Sir, that the hon. and learned Member must know that that is a perfectly superfluous and idle question.

MR. ROSS: I cannot agree that it is superfluous. May I ask whether the £2,098 represents the ordinary pay of these policemen engaged in special protection, or whether it is extra expenditure?

MR. J. MORLEY: I understand that the special cost of this special protection last year was £2,098?

MR. ROSS: Was it the ordinary pay of the police so engaged, or was it in addition to their ordinary pay?

MR. J. MORLEY: I am not sure. I am informed that this special protection is an element of the charge.

MR. ROSS: Will the right hon Gentleman ascertain?

[No answer was returned.]

RESIDENCE OF RESIDENT MAGISTRATES AT PORTUMNA.

MR. SEXTON: On behalf of the hon. Member for East Galway, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Colonel Longbourne, Resident Magistrate, has applied to the Government to allow him to reside at Portumna instead of Loughrea, where his predecessors up to the present have resided; and whether, in view of the feeling in the district and of Colonel Longbourne's association with the agent to Lord Clanricarde, he will be allowed to reside in the immediate vicinity of Portumna Castle?

MR. J. MORLEY: Colonel Longbourne, Resident Magistrate, received permission to reside at Portumna instead of Loughrea, because no suitable house was available at the latter place, while there was one to be had at Portumna. Portumna was formerly the headquarters of a Resident Magistrate, and Colonel Longbourne's immediate predecessor resided about six miles from Loughrea.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Is the reason why a house cannot be obtained for a Resident Magistrate to be found in the fact that Lord Clanricarde refuses to put the house in repair?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have heard something of the kind; I cannot say if it is true.

IRISH AGRICULTURAL CLASS BOOKS.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, in the latest edition of their agricultural class-book, deliberately advertise imported agricultural machinery to the disadvantage of the article made in Ireland; and if this statement is true will he recommend the Commissioners of National Education to give a fair field to Irish manufacturers?

MR. J. MORLEY: The particular book referred to in the question contains a variety of illustrations of agricultural implements named after their inventors or manufacturers, but with no intention of advertising the implements. In the next edition, should another edition come into use, all this will so far as practicable be corrected. The book referred to obtains little or no circulation in the National Schools, less than 400 copies having been sold last year. The book, which is practically the agricultural text-book of the National Schools, and prescribed in the Commissioners' programme for the instruction of the pupils, is that designated "Introduction to Practical Farming," of which about 22,000 were sold last year. This book is in no respect open to the charge conveyed in the first part of the question.

WEXFORD GRAND JURY.

Mr. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the appointment as a Grand Juror of Wexford of Mr. J. J. Percival, junior, who lives in lodgings and pays no county rates, was valid, having regard to the provisions of Section 31 of the Grand Jury Act of 1836, which provides that the Sheriff shall place first on the panel for each barony or half barony the name of some person having in such barony or half barony freehold lands of the yearly value of £50 and upwards, or leasehold land of the value of £100 over and above the amount of rent payable thereout?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am informed that the gentleman named in the question was not on the Grand Jury. This statement, I take it, applies to the last Assizes. When at Wexford he resides with his sisters, who are rated occupiers, and he himself owns freehold property of the value of more than £50 yearly, on which he pays county cess.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY SIGNALMEN.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the resolutions, passed by the Leeds Central Branch of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, protesting against the action of the Great Northern Railway Company in altering the hours of signalmen, in the boxes at Beeston Station and other places on their lines, from eight to 10 hours; and whether he has taken, or will take steps, under the Railway Hours Bill, 1893, to check the action of the Company in thus increasing the hours of labour? I wish, further, to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has not been specially called to the boxes at Barkstone, and to the two boxes at Stevenage; and whether it is not a fact that those boxes and many others on the main line which are now raised to 10 hours have been eight-hour boxes for periods ranging from 21 to seven years, and whether the work at all of them has not enormously increased?

Mr. BRYCE: I am afraid I cannot answer that question as to particular boxes without notice. The number of these boxes is very large. My attention has been called to these resolutions, and the Great Northern Railway Company have been asked for a statement of the duties performed by the signalmen. The Board have no authority under the Railway Regulation Act, 1893, to prevent the Company increasing the hours of their men, but if it is represented to them that the hours when increased are unreasonable they will use the powers given them by the Act with a view to a reduction if it is found to be necessary.

Mr. CHANNING: Does the right hon. Gentleman's answer apply to all the boxes on the line, or to this particular box only?

Mr. BRYCE: To the particular box, in the first instance. The latter part of the answer is, of course, general. We shall act on any representations which may be made to us.

Mr. CHANNING: Have not the Board of Trade power otherwise than by representation to take action in these matters?

Mr. BRYCE: The view the Board of Trade have taken is that their duty is, first of all, to call upon the Company to submit revised schedules, and if the schedules submitted are not in accordance with the views of the Board of Trade the matter is referred to the Railway Commissioners.

THE MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Mr. BARTLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when the Report of the Committee on the Merchant Shipping Bill will be issued?

Mr. BRYCE: I understand that the Report to which the hon. Member refers will be issued very shortly. It is, I believe, not usual to issue Reports on Revision and Consolidation Bills until the Committee is over, when they are issued with the Minutes of Proceedings. But the matter is one rather for the authorities of the House than for me.

ST. LAWRENCE SCHOOL, WALTHAM.

Mr. BARTLEY: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether his attention has been drawn to the case of the Waltham St. Lawrence, Sherlock Street, School, by which a deduction of £6 8s. 4d., or of one-ninth of the total grant to the school, has been made because one of the teachers was only provisionally recognised under Article 68 of the Code; whether he is aware that the Inspector, in his Report on the infant class taught by this teacher, stated that the reading is pretty good, arithmetic good on the whole, and recitation nicely said; and whether, under these circumstances, he will re-consider the withdrawal of the grant to a small agricultural village school?

Mr. ACLAND: The teacher in question was not recognised at all under Article 68, as Her Majesty's Inspector was unable to approve her. A deduction was accordingly made from the grant for insufficiency of staff, according to the universal practice of the Department, under Article 108 of the Code. Her Majesty's Inspector also stated in his Report that the object lessons were very poorly given, and the other occupations of the infants so treated as to have little educational value.

Mr. BARTLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the same teacher was successful in another place, and received the Inspector's approval? Does he know that this is a very small place; that by accident the additional teacher was not returned, and that a heavy loss falls upon the school, which seems to be very hard upon it?

Mr. ACLAND: I did not know that the teacher had been employed and approved elsewhere. I did know an additional teacher was missed out. If any facts are laid before me I will consider them.

COMMANDEERING IN THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of the Transvaal have given up the claim to commandeer British residents in the Transvaal for food and supplies?

Mr. S. BUXTON: As regards the levying of contributions in money or goods, British subjects are now in the same position as all other residents in the Transvaal. Like burghers of the Republic and other foreign subjects they are alike liable to the ordinary war contribution, but to that only.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Is the hon. Gentleman in a position to say whether it is a fact that the British subjects recently commandeered and imprisoned were turned adrift by the Boer authorities in the open trek 200 miles from their homes?

Mr. S. BUXTON: I have no information to that effect.

CHARITABLE BEQUESTS IN IRELAND.

Mr. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether there is any law obliging the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests in Ireland to invest the moneys of the charities they control in Consols, which pay only $2\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. interest, thereby materially limiting the income of the charities concerned; if there be such a law, have the Commissioners invariably acted upon it; if there be no such law, why do they keep these moneys locked up in Consols, and to the detriment of the charities prevent investments in approved securities bearing a larger interest; and is there any means by which the Commissioners may be induced to allow sale of Consols and investments in other securities which are legally open to investment by Trustees, and which bear greater interest?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am informed by the Secretary to the Commissioners that in all cases where application has been made to them to change the investment of charity funds in the hands of the Board, standing in Government Stock, they have been of opinion that the interests of the charities concerned have been best served by retaining the *corpus* of the funds in Government Stock, save in one instance, where under special circumstances the Commissioners were authorised by a scheme of the Court of Chancery to alter the investment. As the Commissioners have adjourned their sittings during the legal recess, I regret it has not been found practicable to obtain a more detailed reply to my hon. Friend's inquiries.

Mr. SEXTON: Has the right hon. Gentleman any objection to representing to the Commissioners the wisdom in the interests of the charities of investing in Consols and other specified securities?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I think that is a very proper matter to call their attention to, and I will do so.

BARRY LINKS.

Captain HOPE (Linlithgow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has come to the knowledge of the War Department that much of the ground acquired by the Government at Barry Links for the encampment of military forces (Regular and Reserve) is rendered practically inaccessible from the nearest railway stations, owing to the fact that the Government, while owning the land bounded on the north by the railway and on the south by the sea, have not acquired any right of access to that land from the north side of the railway; whether early steps will be taken to remedy the very great inconvenience caused by this state of matters; and whether it is the intention of the War Department to make roads suitable for the passage of wheeled traffic, to connect the various camping grounds on the Links; and, if so, when this will be done?

***Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN**: The War Department has no information that Barry Links are inaccessible as described, and no inconvenience has been reported. Roads for communication on the War Department land have been made to meet military requirements, and further roads would, no doubt, be made should they be found necessary.

***Captain HOPE**: If I give the right hon. Gentleman information as to the considerable inconvenience caused, will he make inquiries? As a fact, one brigade, although only a mile from the railway station, had to send its baggage four miles round in order to get it on the rails.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I shall be happy to receive such information. There may be accidental circumstances of that kind which possibly the Military Authorities did not think it worth while to communicate to the War Office.

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY.

Mr. S. SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the new issue of the Directory of the Science and Art Department was distributed through the post to the local secretaries of science and art classes throughout the country on Saturday last, thus entailing the delivery by postmen on Sunday of a large number of parcels each weighing over two pounds; and whether, seeing the desirability of preventing as much as possible all unnecessary Sunday labour, he will give instructions which will prevent Departmental Papers having to be delivered in future on that day?

Mr. ACLAND: Much the larger portion of these Reports were sent out on Friday. Owing to an insufficiency of the supply from the Queen's Printers, some were not sent out till Saturday. An endeavour is always made to avoid sending heavy posts on Saturdays.

SPORTING TELEGRAMS FOR NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Hereford): On behalf of the hon. Member for Deptford, I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether it is within the discretion of the Postmaster General to register newspapers for the receipt of telegrams at specially cheap rates, such telegrams being for publication; does the Post Office accept at such rates telegrams concerning the starting prices of racehorses, in order that bets may be made; is a list of newspapers, registered for that purpose, kept at the General Post Office; and is *The Birmingham Racing News and Sporting Item* amongst the publications so favoured?

Mr. A. MORLEY: It is within the discretion of the Postmaster General to register newspapers for the receipt of telegrams at the Press rates. Such telegrams must consist exclusively of news for immediate publication in the newspapers to which they are addressed, and telegrams containing particulars respecting the starting prices of racehorses would be accepted at the Press rates if intended for publication in a registered newspaper. The answer to the two last paragraphs of the hon. Member's question is in the affirmative.

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in the case of the paper mentioned in the question, the information telegraphed relates entirely to the starting prices of horses; has the Postmaster General any discretion in granting these special rates for telegrams; and, seeing that in the case of the newspaper referred to some time elapsed between the application being made and granted, is it right to assume inquiry was made into the matter?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I am not aware of the facts, but will make inquiry. The special rate is granted under an Act of Parliament.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is it not a fact that the Post Office put a construction of their own on the Act of Parliament?

Mr. A. MORLEY: No. They must be guided by the Act of Parliament.

THE TREATMENT OF FISHER LADS.

Mr. NUSSEY (Pontefract): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the allegations of cruelty to apprentices said to be committed on some of the Grimsby fishing smacks, and to the fact that some of the lads are reported to prefer seven to 14 days' imprisonment, with hard labour, to going to sea in the smack in which they are apprenticed; whether, if there is reason to fear the charges of cruelty well founded, he could suggest any means of preventing the same, or enabling lads to avoid such apprenticeship when unfit for sea service or ill-treated; and whether it would be possible to have some system of licensing masters to have apprentices, and some local supervision over the master and apprentices?

Mr. BRYCE: My attention has been called to the statements which have been made with respect to the working of the fishing apprentice system at Grimsby. The Board of Trade and the Local Government Board, jointly, have instituted an inquiry into the whole system, and I expect to receive in a day or two the Report of the two Inspectors who have conducted the inquiry. Until I have considered it I shall not be in a position to make any statement on the subject.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman cause the inquiry to be extended so as to include the case of pauper apprentices who ought under the law to be looked after by the relieving officers? Also, will it include children on coast-wise colliers?

Mr. BRYCE: The present inquiry has been completed, and I think it will be found that the Report deals with the case of pauper apprentices sent on fishing smacks. It does not go beyond that.

Mr. NUSSEY: Will the Report be laid on the Table?

Mr. BRYCE: I presume so. I have not yet received it, and cannot say whether any part of it is confidential.

SPECIAL ALLOWANCES FOR IRISH TELEGRAPHISTS.

Mr. SWEETMAN (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General will he explain why a smaller allowance is given for special duty to telegraphists during the present Naval Manœuvres than was given some years ago; whether he is aware that 12 Post Office clerks received an allowance at the rate of 12s. a day for a fortnight several summers ago; whether a telegraphist sent from a country station in Ireland is given an even smaller allowance than is given to a Dublin telegraphist for similar work; whether a smaller allowance is given in Ireland than in England; and, if so, on what grounds; whether telegraphists after five years' service are only paid 22s. a week, and whether a reduction of allowance for special duty has the same effect as the reduction of the year's salary; whether it is the practice of the Post Office to pay as low wages and to give as small an extra allowance for special duty as competition will enable it, or to pay a living wage; and whether he will give orders that during the present Naval Manœuvres the same allowance for extra duty shall be given telegraph clerks as is given during Military Manœuvres and race meetings?

Mr. A. MORLEY: No alteration has been made in the allowance given to telegraphists for special duty. So far as I have been able to ascertain, there has been no case in which 12 Post Office clerks have received an allowance of 12s. a day for a fortnight when specially employed on work in connection with the Naval Manœuvres. No distinction is made in the matter of allowances between telegraphists drawn from a country office and those drawn from the Metropolitan Office in Ireland. The subsistence allowances in Ireland are on the same scale as in England. These subsistence allowances have no bearing upon the amount of their wages. The hon. Member must form his own conclusions as to Post Office wages. Full details are given in the Estimates. The allowances arranged for the present Naval Manœuvres appear to be adequate, and I do not propose that they should be increased. The circumstances at Naval Manœuvres differ from those which obtain at race meetings, where the cost of living and sleeping accommodation was abnormally high. At Military Manœuvres the allowances vary according to the circumstances. Every case is carefully considered, and if any case is brought to my notice in which it is considered the allowance is insufficient it will be fully inquired into.

NAVAL MARKSMEN AND THEIR PAY.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state what means are taken, and at what intervals of time, for ascertaining that captains of guns and captains of turrets in the Navy retain their efficiency as marksmen; whether captains of guns and captains of turrets are paid 2d. a day extra each, and whether they are all paid alike, or whether any extra pay is given for greater efficiency in marksmanship; whether, considering the cost of each round fired, varying from £12 in the 6-inch quick-firing gun to £164 in the 16·25-inch gun, and the vital importance to the fighting power of the ship of taking every possible means of increasing the average proportion of hits from one in ten to one in three or one in five, consideration will be given to the adoption of some method whereby increased pay may be given to captains of guns and captains of turrets for increased efficiency in marksmanship; and whether, especially, some increase of pay (coupled with increased tests of the maintenance of efficiency) will be given to captains of turrets on whose marksmanship the safety and fighting power of the ship in action so largely depend?

*__The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY__ (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clitheroe): Captains of guns and turrets fire a certain number of rounds at intervals during each quarter. In addition, every opportunity is taken of practising these men at aiming drills. Their efficiency or otherwise is ascertained from these practices. The extra pay which a captain of turret, a captain of turret gun, and a captain of gun receive in addition to other gunnery or torpedo allowances is specified at pp. 916-7 of the Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions (1893), and prizes are given for good shooting. The accuracy of the statements of fact in paragraph 3 of the hon. Member's question is not admitted. The arrangements already in force are considered to sufficiently secure the maintenance of efficiency.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Would the right hon. Gentleman tell me accurately the cost of each shot? Is it accurate to say that it varies from £12 in the 6in. quick-firing gun to £164 in the 16·25in. gun? Does he deny that? I would also ask whether all the men are paid alike, and whether increased pay might not be given for increased efficiency?

*__Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH__: No, Sir; a difference is not made according to efficiency of the men. I cannot admit the accuracy of the hon. Gentleman's statement as to the cost of each shot. He is not very far wrong, but there would be a great deal more to be said on the subject.

PRIVATE MOORINGS IN PUBLIC ROADSTEADS.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware of the practice of laying down private moorings in public roadsteads and anchorages and of leaving them there; and if the fact that in many instances the buoys marking these moorings are so large as to be a danger to small craft; whether he is aware of the great inconvenience and danger thereby caused to vessels anchoring in such roadsteads in consequence of the risk thereby created of their anchors becoming foul of the moorings laid and left there; and whether the Board of Trade have any power or authority to interfere to prevent such a monopoly of portions of public roadsteads by private individuals; and, if so, how and under what conditions that power is exercised; and, if not, whether they will consider the propriety of issuing notices to mariners, or of taking such other steps as may be necessary to put an end to a practice dangerous to shipping?

Mr. BRYCE: The Board of Trade have received no complaints regarding private moorings in public roadsteads; but if the hon. Member will let me know to what harbour or roadstead he refers, and will send me particulars, I will communicate with the Harbour Authority having jurisdiction. The circumstances of roadsteads, and the legal powers of the Board of Trade as respects roadsteads, vary in different places, and it is therefore impossible for me to give an answer which shall be at once general and correct to the third paragraph of the question.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: My question refers to places where there is no Local Authority. Is not the Board of Trade competent to deal with these cases?

Mr. BRYCE: I do not find any reference to those cases in the question. If the hon. Member can call our attention to any particular cases, we will do what we can.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a dozen new moorings have been laid down this year in the roadstead of Cowes? Will he pay attention to that matter? There is no Local Authority there.

Mr. BRYCE: I am sorry to say I have not been to Cowes this summer; but I am quite willing to take it from the hon. Gentleman that that is so, and I will make inquiries.

DISEASE IN CANADIAN CATTLE.

Sir H. MAXWELL (Wigton): In the absence of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he is yet in a position to lay upon the Table the Report of the Special Commission which was appointed to inquire into the landing from Canada of animals affected with disease; how many weeks have elapsed since the conclusion of that inquiry; and will he afford to hon. Members the opportunity of seeing the Report before proceeding with the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Bill?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): The inquiry to which my right hon. Friend refers did not take the form of an inquiry by a Special Commission, and consequently there will be no Report in the ordinary acceptation of the term. I propose, however, to lay on the Table, as I have already stated, a reasoned Minute analysing the evidence which I have received and setting forth the conclusions at which I have arrived. The *viva voce* examination of witnesses was concluded on the 10th ultimo; but since that date it has been necessary to scrutinise very carefully the various references cited by some of the experts examined, and the subject is so full of technical and scientific detail that some delay in the presentation of the further Papers promised has been unavoidable, but I hope it may not be long before they are available. The Bill to which my right hon. Friend refers is a Consolidation Bill pure and simple, and has been critically examined from that point of view by the Joint Committee of the two Houses. It does not appear to me that the Papers promised as to the Canadian question would be of any assistance to the House in determining whether or not the business of consolidation has been accurately performed, and I should hope that the right hon. Gentleman would, as in other cases, be willing to accept the assurance of the Joint Committee on that point.

CLYDE LIGHTHOUSE TRUSTEES.

Captain SINCLAIR (Dumbartonshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade by what authority and under what conditions the Clyde Lighthouse Trustees deposit river dredgings in Loch Long; when such authority, if it exists, expires; and whether and when the Board of Trade will take the necessary steps to prevent the continuance of this practice?

Mr. BRYCE: I have been advised that the Clyde Lighthouses Act, 1880, empowers the Trustees to deposit in Loch Long or other contiguous lochs, without the consent of the Board of Trade, the dredgings from the works authorised by that Act. By the Clyde

Lighthouses Act, 1890, the time for the completion of the works authorised by the Act of 1880 was extended to the 6th of August, 1895; when that time arrives the Board of Trade will have considered what course can be best adopted to prevent further deposit in Loch Long. I may add that many complaints have been received on the subject, and it engages my anxious attention.

WORKHOUSE IRREGULARITIES IN IRELAND.

Mr. MAINS (Donegal, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board have yet received written explanations from the masters of the following workhouses—namely, Carrickmacross, Castleblaney, Larne, Ballymena, and Newtownards relative to the abuses and discrepancies which existed in them; and, if so, what precautions have been adopted to prevent a repetition of them; and whether the Local Government Board will in future instruct all their Inspectors, when they visit the Unions in their districts, to see that the number of paupers in the house corresponds with the number in the books?

Mr. J. MORLEY: (1) The masters of the workhouses named in this question have submitted their explanations to the Local Government Board. They allege that the discrepancies were entirely the result of an oversight. The Board have reprimanded these officers, and have called their auditor's attention to the matter, in order that the cost of maintenance entered in the workhouse books in respect of the paupers who have left the house may be surcharged to the workhouse masters. (2) The Board believe that it is the practice on the part of some of the Inspectors to count the paupers in the workhouses, and they have intimated to all of them, in view of what has transpired in the district in question, that it is desirable that this should periodically be done.

IRISH SHERIFFS.

Mr. MAINS: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Sheriffs were appointed in Irish counties before Circuits or Assizes were established in Ireland, and that the late Sir John Perrot (Lord Deputy of Queen Elizabeth) and his successors appointed Sheriffs for the Ulster counties, though the first Assize in Ulster was held in the reign of King James I.; whether it is the fact that Sheriffs for the Irish counties were so appointed by the Lord Lieutenant without nomination of the Judges till about the year 1826; also that it was found by the Report of the Commissions to inquire into the office of Sheriffs (for Ireland), published in 1826, that the nomination of persons by the Judges for the office of Sheriff in Ireland is a mere practice of the Judges of Assize; whether he is aware that in 1837 the then Lord Lieutenant, Lord Mulgrave (during the Under Secretaryship of Thomas Drummond) each year appointed Sheriffs who were not nominated by the Judges or the acting Sheriffs, and that the legality of such appointments was judicially decided and upheld by Mr. Justice Burton, at the Assizes for the County of Monaghan, in the month of March, 1837; and whether he will consider the advisability of reverting to this practice?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The hon. Member has put to me a large number of questions, to answer which would require considerable investigation into Irish history. I may say this, however: that I am quite aware of the great importance of the subject, and that I have had inquiries made, but necessarily of a very cursory kind, since the question was put upon the Paper. So far as the last paragraph bears on the action taken during the Under Secretaryship of Thomas Drummond, it is, so far as I can ascertain, perfectly true. The question, however, is a very serious constitutional one, as all learned gentlemen in this House are fully aware. But what I promise the hon. gentleman is that I will look into it very carefully and very promptly to see how the law really lies, and what are the powers of the Lord Lieutenant in this matter.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL asked whether there was not some difficulty in getting gentlemen to undertake this office? Was it not going begging?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Not exactly going begging. But gentlemen proposed for it beg very hard to be relieved.

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman, when instituting inquiries on this subject, would refer to the very valuable Report published upon this subject by the late Mr. David Lynch, who was afterwards Judge of the Encumbered Estates Court in Ireland, which dealt very fully with the whole question?

MR. CARSON (Dublin University): Will the right hon. Gentleman promise, pending the settlement of this question, not to prosecute any gentlemen who may refuse to undertake such an office?

MR. J. MORLEY: Oh, no, Sir. Law and order must be maintained.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES' RETURNS.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Registrar of Friendly Societies, of Abingdon Street, Westminster, has received the balance sheet and Returns (under the Trade Union Acts of 1871 and 1876) of the Railway *Employés* and General Mutual Legal Aid Society, of 266, Gray's Inn Road; whether he is aware that a Mr. Glew has constituted himself secretary and treasurer of this Society, and sent in as yet no Return since the formation of the said Society; that the President of this Society, Mr. E. J. Walker, is dead, and that notwithstanding this fact his name still appears as President upon the circulars of this Society; whether any meeting of members has ever been held; whether any minutes of the Society have ever been kept or produced; whether a Mr. Sayer is Trustee; if so, can he state who appointed him, and whether he has a banking account in the name of the Society; where are the registered offices; and will he cause inquiry to be made into the facts of this case, and if it should prove to be a bogus Friendly Society, by means of which several watermen and lightermen and other poor operatives have been taken in, he will institute further proceedings to prevent the possibility of further harm being done?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The Registrar of Friendly Societies has not received the annual Return (under the Trade Union Acts of 1871 and 1876) of the Railway *Employés* and General Mutual Legal Aid Society, of 266, Gray's Inn Road, but proceedings to enforce the Return have been commenced. The name of Mr. J. Glew appears on the Rules of the Trade Union as Secretary and Treasurer. The Trade Union was registered in August, 1891. It is correct that Mr. Glew has sent in as yet no Return since the formation of the Trade Union. The Registrar has no knowledge of the other circumstances stated, nor has he any authority to require minutes of meetings to be produced; but every member or person having an interest in the funds has the right to inspect them at all reasonable times. On the registry of the Trade Union the name of Mr. John Sayer was returned as its Trustee. The authority for the statement that he was so is that of the seven members who signed the Rules. The Registrar has no knowledge whether Mr. Sayer has a banking account in the name of the Trade Union. The registered office is 266, Gray's Inn Road. The Registrar has no authority under the Trade Union Acts to make inquiry into the facts of the case or to institute any proceedings other than those for enforcing the Return. The Society is not a Friendly Society of any kind, but is a Trade Union for certain defined objects. I think that my hon. Friend has done a public service in calling attention to the question.

MR. MACDONA: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his answer. Is he aware that Mr. Glew offers to give tramway men, for the sum of 1s. a year, the best legal advice possible in all cases? Is it not within his province to warn the members of Friendly Societies against these things? Will he, in order to prevent the working classes being swindled in this manner, have the answer that he has just given made public?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The answer will be sent up to the Press Gallery, and no doubt the newspapers will take notice of it.

THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON COMMISSION.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether it is intended to proceed this Session with legislation on the general lines of the Report of the University of London Commission?

MR. ACLAND: The matter has been under very careful consideration for some time, and the Government are really anxious to proceed with the matter. But

I am afraid it is too late now to do anything this Session.

ROYAL VICTORIA YARD, DEPTFORD.

Mr. RADCLIFFE COOKE: On behalf of the hon. Member for Deptford, I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether six permanent day coopers employed in the Royal Victoria Yard, Deptford, have had their wages reduced from 30s. to 26s. a week; and whether these men's pensions will be calculated on a higher rate than their present weekly pay?

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. Robertson, Dundee): There are no permanent day coopers at Deptford. Any cooper who is qualified, and wishes it, has his turn at piece-work. It is incorrect to say that the wages have been reduced. The rate of 30s., or 5s. a day, was paid for some time in consequence of a mistake in an Admiralty letter. When the mistake was discovered, the proper rate of 4s. 4d. a day was resumed. The nominal rate of 30s. a week was fixed by the Treasury for the purpose of calculating the pensions of men who, being employed on piece-work, earn on an average 30s. a week or more. It does not apply to men who are not employed on piece-work at all, as the rule is that pension cannot be calculated at a higher rate than actual pay.

LOUGH ERNE DRAINAGE.

Mr. ROSS: On behalf of the hon. Member for North Fermanagh, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury can he say how many cases remain still undisposed of within the Lough Erne drainage area in which applications have been made by landowners to have increased rents placed upon tenants in respect of alleged drainage benefits to their holdings; what was the estimated annual amount of such benefit in the cases already disposed of by the Board of Works Commissioners; and what was the actual annual increased rent imposed?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I am informed that no applications in this case remain undisposed of. The increased value of the lands, as estimated by the Board of Works at the inquiry after the completion of the works, is £1,503 5s. 3d., and this is the amount that the tenants pay by way of increased rent.

BOMBAY AND ADEN MAIL OFFICERS.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, during the first quarter of 1894, the assistant mail officers, employed in the Sea Post Office between Bombay and Aden, worked on an average over 12 hours a day; and that, out of 53 days of such employment, they, during 26 days, worked over 16 hours a day, and, in four cases, over 20 hours a day; and whether, considering the effect of such hours on health in a tropical climate, he will cause inquiry to be made into the grievance complained of?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The information at the India Office does not come down to so late a date as the first quarter of 1894. In a Report relating to 1893, it is stated that the staff is fixed so as to give each sorter about eight hours' work a day during a run of five days. In exceptional cases of very fast runs, they may with a heavy mail have to work for 10 hours a day. In order to get through the work early in the voyage, they sometimes—especially if the weather is favourable—work longer; but, if so, it is by their own choice. The arrangements are such that, out of every 21 days, every sorter gets at least 10 days' rest ashore, besides an additional week at Bombay after every three trips. I will, however, inquire whether, as a matter of fact, the sorters have been allowed voluntarily to work for the hours mentioned in the question, which would appear to be excessive

EAST BERGHOLT CHARITY LANDS.

Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether the Commissioners have given their sanction to the proposed sale of Charity Land at East Bergholt, Suffolk, which sale is opposed by many of the inhabitants?

Mr. F. S. STEVENSON: The Commissioners have not given their sanction to the proposed sale. They are now in communication with the parties interested, and hope that a settlement may be thereby arrived at which will meet the views of the labourers and be conducive also to the interests of the charity. I may also refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to Question No. 24 to-day.

STATE GRANTS TO NONCONFORMISTS.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can give the amount of the grants made by the State to Nonconformist Bodies since the reign of Queen Anne up to the present date?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I would refer the hon. Member to the Return No. 650 of 1845, giving information on this subject for the period of 1800 to 1844, and to the Paper No. 420 of 1893 in continuation of the former. I am afraid that I could not justify the heavy expenses and enormous labour which would be involved by a historical research carried back beyond 1800.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY SIGNALMEN.

MR. CHANNING: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the result of communications with the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company has been that the Company has undertaken to reduce the hours of their signal boxes from 12 to 10; whether he is aware that several signal boxes on the main line between Brighouse and Normanton, at which the hours are reduced to 10, were previously closed on Sundays, but that now since the change of hours the signalmen at these boxes are compelled to relieve other boxes which are always open on Sundays, and to work a spell of 12 hours at such boxes; whether there are still a large number of busy boxes which have not been dealt with by the Company; and whether he will take further steps to make the Company comply with the spirit as well as the letter of the Railway Hours Act, and complete the scheme of reduction of hours at the signal boxes not as yet dealt with?

MR. BRYCE: Yes, Sir; in consequence of the action of the Board of Trade the Railway Company have undertaken to reduce all the 12-hour boxes on the Brighouse and Normanton section of their line to 10 hours, and two 10-hour cabins have been brought down to eight hours. If representations in terms of the Act as to the insufficiency of rest on Sunday are made to the Board of Trade the Board will certainly take action upon them. There are busy boxes on other sections of this railway in regard to which complaints have been received, and the Board are using the powers of the Act of 1893 in the manner which it contemplates.

THE TREATMENT OF PAUPER CHILDREN.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can now tell the House what is to be the form of his promised inquiry into the conditions under which pauper children are educated in barrack or associated schools?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central): When a few days ago I promised an inquiry into the workhouse schools I stated my preference for the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee. I have, however, found it impossible to deal with the subject in this manner this Session, and the question as regards London is one which it is not desirable to postpone until next Session. For the same reason it is not expedient to appoint a large Commission, with the result, probably, of a protracted investigation lasting over two or three years. The Government, therefore, consider that the inquiry will be best conducted by a Committee of some five or seven persons, nominated by the Government, but not consisting of officers of the Department. The inquiry will be directed to the case of London, where the large workhouse schools chiefly exist, and where there is very great difficulty at the present time in providing for the increasing number of children. I will only add that this form of inquiry will be satisfactory to the right hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, who introduced the deputation to me. I hope in a few days to be able to give the names of the persons who will form the Committee.

MR. DODD: Will the Government appoint a lady on the Committee?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: The advisability of doing so is receiving our consideration.

JABEZ BALFOUR.

Sir A. ROLLIT: Can the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs give the House any information as to the extradition of Jabez Balfour?

Sir E. GREY: No, Sir; we are still waiting for the decision of the Federal Judge at Salta.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): What will be the course of business after the Scotch Local Government Bill has been disposed of?

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I suppose there is no intention of taking the Report of the Equalisation of Rates Bill to-morrow. My right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, having been told by the President of the Local Government Board that it would not be taken till Monday, has made arrangements which will render it very inconvenient, if not impossible, for him to attend to-morrow.

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: What passed on the termination of the Committee was that I stated that the Report stage would not probably be taken till Monday. Two hours later I stated that I had made inquiries, and found that it would be convenient both for the Government and the House to take it to-morrow night.

Mr. BARTLEY: Is it not a fact that certain alterations of clauses and Amendments have been put down which we shall not have an opportunity of seeing till to-morrow night?

Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I have made arrangements so that they will be in the hands of Members immediately.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH: As my right hon. Friend, on the faith of the statement of the President of the Local Government Board, paired until Monday, I do protest against taking the Report to-morrow.

Mr. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): If the Scotch Bill is not completed to-night, will it be the first Order to-morrow?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Yes, but we hope it will be finished to-day. It will be followed to-morrow by the Committee on the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill. With regard to the Equalisation of Rates Bill, if there is any feeling on the Opposition side that it should not be taken to-morrow it will be postponed until Monday.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): Cannot the Crofters Bill be taken after the Scotch Local Government Bill?

Mr. J. MORLEY: That question can only have justice done to it by the Leader of the House himself.

Mr. S. SMITH: When is it proposed to take the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The discussion on the Eight Hours (Mines) Bill will follow on the Equalisation of Rates Bill.

GREAT WESTERN AND MIDLAND COMPANIES BILL.

Sir A. ROLLIT: Will the President of the Board of Trade state what action the Board of Trade took in the Committee proceedings on this Bill?

Mr. BRYCE: I will state now what I had intended to state in the House if this matter had been raised, as I expected it would be, on the consideration of the Bill last Tuesday. I may say that I was present at the time of Private Business then for that purpose, but understood from the proceedings then, and from the absence of any notice in the Paper, that nothing further was to be said on the subject. I was, in fact, yesterday within the precincts of the House presiding over a Royal Commission. The action of the Board of Trade was impeded by the fact that all Petitions against the Bill, so far as rates are concerned, were withdrawn, and consequently the Board of Trade had, strictly speaking, no ground for making any representation to the Committee. By the courtesy of the Committee, however, the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade was called before them and made a statement with regard to the question of rates. It appears that considerable concessions had been made by the Companies, not only as regards through but as regards local rates, and although it is possible that some of these concessions do not fully satisfy every one of the traders interested, the withdrawal of all Petitions against the Bill left the Board of Trade no power to press their views more strongly on the attention of the Committee. The persons who will be most affected by the fact that higher maxima obtain on the Severn and Wye Railway than on the Midland Railway will be principally consignors of coal for shipment, and I did not understand that it was on their behalf that the hon. Member for Islington addressed the House; but as I have stated, it was only by the courtesy of the Committee that the Board of Trade, in the absence of any Petition against the Bill, was able to take the action which they did.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: Assuming that the Standing Orders with regard to Private Bills do not permit the Board of Trade to be represented before Committees in support of its own Reports, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of so altering the Standing Orders as to enable this to be done?

MR. BRYCE: That is a very difficult question, and I can only say at present that it is receiving careful consideration. I think there would be no objection on the part of the Board of Trade to place its views before a Committee on Private Bills, but I do not think the Board should appear in conflict with either the opponents or supporters of a Bill. I should very much deprecate that, and indeed I do not suppose the right hon. Gentleman intends that. Subject to that, I think it is desirable that the Board of Trade should have every opportunity of being represented.

*MR. TOMLINSON asked if it was not the duty of the Board of Trade to lay before the Committee instances in which the rates and charges proposed to be allowed in a Bill under their consideration deviated from the limits of the Provisional Order Acts previously sanctioned?

MR. BRYCE: That is exactly what was done in this case. The Permanent Secretary of the Board of Trade called attention to the fact that the maximum rates charged in the Bill were higher than the general maxima.

MOTION.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

MR. J. MORLEY: I beg to move for leave to introduce a short Bill affecting the Congested Districts Board, and approved by the Leader of the Opposition, who is a member of the Board. Its provisions are very simple, and I can explain them, I think, in one minute. The Congested Districts Board is empowered to purchase land with a view to sale to the tenants afterwards. The tenant approaches the Land Commissioners in the ordinary way, and the Land Commissioners make an advance. In the case of an ordinary landlord the Land Commission requires, as the House knows, a guarantee and deposit to the extent of one-fifth of the purchase money. In this Bill we propose, in the case of purchasers by the Congested Districts Board, that in advances made by that Board the retention of the guarantee deposit shall not be required, the Board guaranteeing the payment of the one-fifth in case there should be a default. Then, as to another point. In an ordinary case of sale and purchase the tenant buys at a rate which satisfies what is called the claims of the Tenants Insurance Fund. We propose that in that case, too, the Bill shall guarantee an amount equal to the guarantee deposit, and that the purchaser's insurance money shall not be more than 4 per cent. The cases so dealt with, so far as purchases are effected by the Congested Districts Board, will not be very numerous. They are of a peculiar character, and these provisions are essential for the carrying out of these powers of the Board. One other clause in the Bill makes provision for the appointment by the Board of certain of its own officers. I think that is the whole scope for the proposal.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to the Congested Districts Board for Ireland."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he did not offer any opposition to the Bill, but he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary if he was right in concluding that the Board proposed to guarantee out of its own income?

MR. J. MORLEY: That is so.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Then that seriously imperils what, after all, is a very small income for the purposes of the Board.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Does this Bill either directly or indirectly affect the taxpayer of England?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Not unless the Congested Districts Board over-spends itself in regard to its income, and is unable to carry out its own guarantees.

Mr. BARTLEY: Then the "predominant partner" would come in?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Yes.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. J. Morley and Mr. A. J. Balfour.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 353.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 337.)

CONSIDERATION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [8th August] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended.

And which Amendment was, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the word "three," and insert the word "five." — (*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'three' stand part of the Bill."

Debate resumed.

Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said, he desired to say a few words in support of the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Partick (Mr. Parker Smith) at the previous Sitting to introduce two unpaid members to the Scotch Local Government Board in addition to the three official members. To put himself right with the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland, he would say that he did not intend to move the Amendment which stood in his name, but he certainly considered it desirable that some further discussion should take place as to the composition of the Board. The Amendment—which, as he said, he did not intend to move—was not designed with any hostility to the medical or legal members of the Board, but was rather aimed at the too professional character, if he might so say, of the Board—at the fact that the administrative powers would be confined entirely to the hands of the medical and legal officers. Some thought that the Amendment would make the Board too large. He himself had held that opinion in Committee; still, he did not see how it would be possible to arrive at the desirable result that the Board should not be of too professional a character, except by the adoption of some such Amendment. He thought it most desirable that all parties should be satisfied with the Board; indeed, that was necessary if the new development was to work well. He did not think it possible to arrive at that general satisfaction by simply gratifying two classes. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that amongst the "professional classes" in Scotland there was immense satisfaction with the composition of the Board. But these "professional classes" were simply the medical and legal classes. He (Mr. Cochrane) had discussed the subject with members of these two professions, and he did not think they cared much about it one way or the other—indeed, throughout the whole of Scotland there was a feeling of indifference in regard to the Bill. He certainly thought, however, that they should add to the Board some element which would appeal more to the ordinary business feeling of the persons who in the past had been in the habit of managing local government in Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir G. Trevelyan) had told them upstairs that one of the chief advantages was that "members were to give their whole time to the Board." But when they examined the composition of the Board he did not think that that was borne out at all. The Secretary for Scotland was not going to give the whole of his time to the Board. It could not be expected. The Under Secretary had a great many other things to do, and could not be expected to give all his time to the duties. The same might be said of the Solicitor General for Scotland, and when they came to the three administrative members of the Board—the vice-chairman, the medical officer, and the legal officer—they found that only two of them were expected to give their whole time to the Board. The legal officer was surely to give what was described by the right hon. Gentleman as "sufficient time"; therefore, only one-third, or two members, of the Board would give their whole or "sufficient" time. What, then, became of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman in opposing the Amendment of the hon. Member last night? The right hon. Gentleman then said—

> "Able and continuous service was not likely to be rendered by men who were not salaried and not bound to give their whole time to the performance of the duties with which they were entrusted. Their influence also would be less than that of salaried officials."

The Solicitor General was to get no extra pay for sitting on the Board, neither was the Secretary for Scotland, nor the Under Secretary. So that if the argument used yesterday, in opposing the Amendment, was at all valid, it applied to only two-thirds of the members of the Board. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to give them some idea as to how much time the legal member was to give to the work, and what was to be his position? And was it not essential that the legal officer should also give the whole of his time to the service of the Board? To his mind, all the members of the Administrative Board should be placed on the same footing. Then he would ask why it should only be the legal and the medical classes that were represented on the Board? Was there no professional teaching in Scotland? Was not education one of the most important matters that could be dealt with? Were not the School Boards to be placed under Parish Councils; therefore, why should not there be some element connected with education on the Board? Why should not those who would have to bring up future generations be in any degree represented on the Board? He thought their duties were quite as germane to the Bill as those of medical and legal gentlemen. He was afraid that the legal element was too strong to hope to eliminate it from the Board now. The legal element had a great many friends on the Front Benches. He deplored the fact that in Scotland so much business was in the hands of lawyers. He did not say that their work was not efficiently performed. Four-fifths of the land in Scotland was managed by lawyers, and he knew that the Scotch landlords in consequence acquired a good deal of unpopularity. He greatly feared that the same thing would happen with the Scotch Local Government Board. With a leaven of the legal element upon it he was afraid the Board would take, he would not say a narrow, but, at any rate, a professional view of matters which arose. Then, again, he considered that the salary of the legal member was insufficient to attract the best talent. A legal practitioner who had been in practice seven years was expected to give up the whole of his time for £1,000 a year; and surely for this they would not get the best man. What a private individual would do if he wished to have a legal point cleared up would be to go to a lawyer in actual practice and in touch with the Courts. But the opinion of a man who had been shelved after seven years' practice would not be of the same value as that of a man selling his legal knowledge in the open market. He did not think that in this matter the Government were doing the best they could to get legal advice for the Board. The Legal Officers of the Crown would always be available; and it would have been sufficient, he thought, to depend upon them. As to the medical officer, he should have preferred him to have been a salaried official who would have visited the localities when necessary and have made inquiries and submitted Reports. As it was, he would go down to the localities and make inquiries and investigations, and report and decide upon his own Report. It was obvious that sanitary science was not an exact science, and that as to the causes of fevers, diphtheria, and other diseases, and the best means of prevention, doctors were likely often to disagree. He had had experience of this in his own district of Kilwinning. Diseases were not attributable to the same causes in the country districts as in towns. Then there were duties to be discharged by the Board for which the professional members were not specially qualified. They had under Section 9 of the Act to approve of, and in certain cases fix, the numbers of Parish Councillors, a duty which required practical knowledge of the work. Under Section 31 powers were given to appoint committees to manage churchyards and charities, and to sanction schemes. These were all powers requiring local knowledge. Under Section 37 power was given to approve of auditor and "prescribe a scale of remuneration." Sections 24 and 25 dealt largely with land, and provided for consent as to letting for more than one year, or sale or exchange, and the determination of what was "suitable land for public purposes." He submitted that to make the Board practical and useful some other element than the two professional classes he had referred to should be infused into it. If there was one thing more necessary than another in Scotland it was that those managing public departments should have the confidence of the whole people, and that, he submitted, could not be the case with the Local Government Board as it was now proposed.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 2, line 8, leave out "shall," and insert "is."

Line 8, leave out "be."

Line 11, leave out "who."

Line 12, leave out "and who," and insert "Such third appointed member."

MR. MAXWELL (Dumfries-shire) moved, in page 3, line 13, after "such," to insert "auditors."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR, Clackmannan, &c.) rose to Order. He said this Amendment would involve the appointment of officers to be "paid out of moneys provided by Parliament," and therefore could not be moved by a private Member.

MR. SPEAKER said, the Amendment was clearly out of Order.

MR. MAXWELL said, that being so, he would move to leave out "medical officers," in order to insert "auditors" in their place. That would not involve any additional cost to the taxpayer. He had raised this question in the Committee upstairs, and the view that official auditors should be appointed in place of auditors accountable to no one but themselves received considerable support.

*MR. SPEAKER ruled that the Amendment was out of Order. The hon. Gentleman moved to omit "medical officers," in order to insert "auditors," which he had already ruled out of Order.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 3, line 13, leave out "assistant."

Mr. Cochrane

On Motion of Mr. PARKER SMITH, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 3, line 38, after "parishes," insert "not including any part of the area of a police burgh."

Line 39, after "Council," insert—

"(c) In the case of parishes wholly within a police burgh by the Burgh Commissoners."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 4, line 1, leave out the second "and," and insert "or."

CAPTAIN HOPE said, he wished to move to amend Clause 9, which dealt with the constitution of Parish Councils, by substituting the following sub-section for Sub-section 2 of the clause:—

"For the purposes of the first election of Parish Councils, the various authorities named in the preceding sub-section shall, before fixing the number and proportion of the Parish Councillors, consult with the Parochial Boards, and with such other Local Authorities as may appear to be concerned, in each parish. And, as regards any subsequent alterations of numbers or proportion of Parish Councillors, no change shall be made without consultation with the Parish Councils and such other Local Authorities as may appear to the Board to be concerned. In any case of difference of opinion among Local Authorities, the decision of the Board shall be final."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, this was exhaustively provided for in a clause at the end. It was be more appropriate to raise the question on that clause.

*CAPTAIN HOPE said, that part of the Amendment related to subsequent alterations of the constitution of Parish Councils. His object in moving the Amendment was to draw attention to the fact there was no provision in the Bill that, in the first election of these new Parish Councils, those who were now actively engaged in the administration of parish affairs should be consulted by the authorities who fixed the number and proportion of the Parish Councillors. The new Boards were to be appointed by the County Councils and the Town Councils, no doubt under the supervision of the Local Government Board, but it seemed to him only reasonable that those who were at the present time in active management of the affairs of the parish should be consulted, at any rate, and have some voice in the fixing of the number and proportion of Parish Councillors. The first part of the Amendment applied only to the first election, the second part to subsequent alterations of numbers or proportion of Parish Councillors. He submitted that those were now actually engaged in the administration of parish affairs were entitled to be consulted in these matters. Hon. Gentlemen opposite were very fond of speaking slightingly of Parochial Boards in Scotland. They were not ideal representative bodies, but still they had admittedly done the work which had been given to them well and to the advantage of the community. They were, therefore, in a position to know what the actual difficulties and necessities of the parish than the County Councils or Town Councils or Burgh Commissioners would be without guidance of any kind. By the Bill they were establishing Parish Councils and instructing the County Councils and other authorities to fix the number of the Parish Councillors, and giving those authorities power to alter the constitution of the Parish Councils from time to time. He submitted that his proposal was a reasonable one, and one which the Government should accept as it stood.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 5, leave out Sub-section (2), of Clause 9, and insert the words,—

"(2) For the purposes of the first election of Parish Councils, the various authorities named in the preceding sub-section shall, before fixing the number and proportion of the Parish Councillors, consult with the Parochial Boards, and with such other Local Authorities as may appear to be concerned, in each parish. And, as regards any subsequent alterations of numbers or proportion of Parish Councillors, no change shall be made without consultation with the Parish Councils and such other Local Authorities as may appear to the Board to be concerned. In any case of difference of opinion among Local Authorities, the decision of the Board shall be final."—(*Captain Hope.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2), of Clause 9, stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that, so far as the hon. and gallant Gentleman desired to leave out Sub-section (2) there, the Government were with him; but they were not prepared to accept the sub-section he proposed in its place. The hon. and gallant Gentleman proposed that the authorities named in the preceding sub-section should have a statutory warning to consult the Parochial Boards as to fixing the number of Parish Councillors and so forth. The Government took it for granted that these Boards would be consulted, seeing that they were representative authorities cognisant of the circumstances of each district. The matter was one of common sense, and to include points of this kind in the provisions would necessitate the passage of a Bill twice the ordinary length. He did not propose to refer to the English Act with regard to any positive enactment. Scotch Representatives knew best what they wanted for their own country. But it was a difficult matter when it was a question of whether England would trust the common sense of the authorities whom they made responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Act. No corresponding Amendment was inserted in the English Act, and he thought it was quite unnecessary to insert the Amendment here.

Sir C. PEARSON (Edinburgh and St. Andrews Universities) said, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have some fear that if the existing bodies were consulted some objection would be raised by his supporters or some animadversion would be made upon the Bill. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman to explain his reference to the English Act. He should like to know what Local Bodies existed in England that were analogous to the Parochial Boards of Scotland? How could the English Act have referred to the possible consultation of Local Bodies which did not exist until after the Act came into operation? The right hon. Gentleman appeared to have said nothing to countervail the reasons which had been given for the Amendment.

Mr. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said, that although it might be a matter of common sense that this duty should be discharged by County Councils, it was desirable to secure uniformity of action on the part of County Councils. The right hon. Gentleman said the County Councils would obviously consult the Parochial Boards. It might be said it was obvious that the number of members of the Parish Councils should be fixed after consultation with the Parochial Boards, and yet it was provided by Subsection 2 that the number should be fixed after consultation with the Parochial

Boards. He hoped that the Government would reconsider their decision on the point.

Mr. PARKER SMITH (Lanark, Partick) pointed out that some of the largest County Councils strongly objected to have anything to do with this matter, and thought it ought not to be left in their hands at all, but ought to be left to the decision of the Parochial Boards. That being so, he certainly thought the Amendment ought to be adopted—at any rate, as far as the first arrangement of wards and the first election of members were concerned. No doubt as regarded future changes the Parish Councils could quite take care of themselves. If the Government were willing to accept the Amendment as far as the first arrangements were concerned, he would advise his hon. and gallant Friend to be satisfied with that.

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire) said, it appeared to him that the object of the Amendment was to continue the influence of the older Boards upon the new ones, and, as the older Boards were chiefly Conservative, he hoped the Government would not accept the Amendment.

Mr. COCHRANE asked whether the Government were willing to accept the Amendment as far as the first election was concerned?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, the Government did not think it necessary to do so, because they believed that the County Councils, in carrying out the duties imposed upon them, would consult all available sources of information, knowledge, and experience.

Question put, and negatived.

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 66; Noes 140.—(Division List, No. 215.)

Mr. RENSHAW moved, in page 4, line 12, after "Councillors," to insert "and the proportion for the landward and burghal parts respectively." He said that in Committee he had called attention to this subject, and had quoted certain cases to which he again wished to draw attention. In the parish of Dunblane the total population consisted of 3,300, of whom 2,200 were in the burgh and 1,100 were in the landward part of the parish, whilst in the burgh the property was valued at £9,381 and in the landward part the valuation was £52,100. In Kilmarnock the burghal population was 900 and the landward population 1,900, the valuation of the burghal portion being £6,000, and of the landward portion £19,000. Supposing Dunblane to have a Parish Council: six of the members, on the basis of population, would go the burgh and three to the landward part. That would be unfair. This, in respect of the duties devolving on the landward committee, would be redressed by Amendments made on the Bill, but that did not apply in the case of the administration of the matters which devolved on the Parish Council as such—that was to say, matters of administration in respect of the Poor Law.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 12, after the word "Councillors," to insert the words "and the proportion for the landward and burghal parts respectively."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that the hon. Member had taken so much interest in the Bill, and done so much to amend it, that the Government were anxious to meet his wishes, and they would be prepared to accept the first part of his proposal, but not the last part, as expressed in a later Amendment—

> "And in the case of parishes, partly burghal and partly landward, the value of property therein."

The hon. Gentleman had argued on the last part, and on that part the Government had taken a very decided line indeed. In the Debates in the Committee all the special circumstances of a parish in the fixing of the number of Councillors were considered to come under the head, "Circumstances of the parish." To give a larger number of representatives to a particular part of a parish on account of the value being higher was, in the opinion of the Government, inconsistent with the true principles of representation. The reason that one part of a district was poorer and another richer was very often that the pauperism of the richer part was concentrated in the poorer part. The proposal of the hon. Member was contrary to the tendency of legislation for a long while past. It would be a retrograde step in any way to distinguish between the richer and poorer parts of the same district.

SIR C. PEARSON said, he regretted that the Secretary for Scotland only accepted the proposal partially, because the first Amendment did not go nearly so far as the second Amendment was intended to go. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had rather exaggerated the effect of the Amendment when he said it was contrary to the spirit of legislation. It would be so to a large extent if this were an injunction to fix proportional representation in the case of the landward and burghal parts of a parish upon valuation alone; but they all knew that the distribution of money, combined with a view of population and other matters, had been accepted by Parliament as a just mode of apportioning other burdens or benefits. The Government themselves, in this clause, did not confine themselves to what, according to the right hon. Gentleman, was the only true principle—population only. If the Secretary for Scotland could assure them that under the words "special wants and circumstances of the parish" there was intended to be included anything approaching the spirit of the Amendment, that might go some length to satisfy them.

DR. CLARK said, he thought that the Amendment would be a very bad one, and was glad that the Government were going to oppose it. He knew something about Dunblane, and if it were a question of area he could have understood something being said. But it seemed to him an absurd thing that, merely because a few people would go to one quarter and build villas there, they should have additional representation.

MR. RENSHAW said, he only spoke to the two Amendments to save time, but he moved the first one at this stage.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Mr. CALDWELL, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 4, line 14, to leave out the words "according to the last published Census for the time being."

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 16, after the word "divided," to insert the words—

"And in the case of parishes partly burghal and partly landward the value of property therein."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question put, "That those words be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 62; Noes 142.—(Division List, No. 216.)

MR. CALDWELL moved to amend Clause 10 by omitting the following proviso:—

"Provided that exemption from or failure to make payment of the special rate authorised by this Act, where such rate is due and payable by persons so registered, shall be a disqualification from voting at an election of a Parish Council unless such rate is paid during the period of one year subsequent to service of the demand note requiring payment of the same."

He said, that this proviso was not in the original Bill, and it was inserted in the Grand Committee at the instance of hon. Members opposite. The Government on this matter had the support of hon. Members opposite, but they had not a single supporter from the Liberal Benches with the exception of official Scottish Members. According to the Bill, there was to be a special parish rate established for the first time, and that special rate would be put on the notice of the Poor Law assessment, and would be collected along with the poor rate. As the law now stood, no man could be put on the County Council Register unless he had paid his poor rate on or before the 20th of June. As the special rate was put on the same assessment notice, and was levied and collected with the poor rate, it was obvious that no man could possibly be on the Register for the Parish Council unless he paid his poor rates on or before the 20th of June. It was plain, therefore, that this proviso was quite unnecessary. It was a piece of nonsense to say—

"Unless such rate is paid during the period of one year subsequent to service of the demand note requiring payment of the same."

The giving of a year's grace for the payment of the special rate had no possible meaning whatever, because a man who had not paid his poor rate and his special rate by the 20th of June would not be on the Register at all. This pretended year of grace, therefore, had no meaning whatever, and he could not conceive how such a stupid proviso could be put into the Bill by the Government. Had they not disqualification enough already? The Government were putting this in quite unnecessarily, because even if this were left out there would still remain the disqualification if the special rate were not paid on the 20th June. They had gone out of their way to emphasise a new disqualification, and put it on the Statute Book, although they had always complained of the opposite Party introducing these disqualifications for non-payment of rates. They would find that this matter would be taken advantage of by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and by no one more than by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman's presence in the House just now had reference to this particular matter, and the right hon. Gentleman would make a strong point of the fact that the Government themselves in a Parochial Bill such as this had been compelled to establish a new disqualification as regarded voting. Again, look at another effect. Suppose they passed another Registration Bill to-morrow, and they took away the disqualification from the Parochial Board election for the non-payment of poor rate every man in a landward portion of a parish would be disqualified because he had not paid his special rate, whereas he could not pay his special rate without paying the poor rate, they both being included in the same demand note. They would be bound to pay their poor rate in the landward parishes, and also the special rate, whereas in the burghs they would have no disqualification with regard to the poor rate. The result, again, would be that the Government would find, in passing a Registration Bill, they would require a proviso which would eliminate these people in a landward portion of a county from disqualification in regard to the poor rate; it would require a special provision to do this, and the passing of such a clause would take up a good deal of time, as it would meet with strenuous opposition from the other side. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 22, to leave out from the word "register," to the end of sub-section (1), of Clause 10.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'Provided that exemption from or failure to make payment' stand part of the Bill."

SIR D. MACFARLANE (Argyll) hoped his hon. Friend would not be offended if he said he thought he had discovered a Parliamentary mare's nest. The hon. Member said that people would be disqualified for non-payment of their special rate. That was not so. A man would go to the poor rate collector, and would say, "There is my poor rate and the other rates due on the 20th of June. I claim to be put on the Register, and this Bill gives me 12 months' credit for this rate." He would not be disqualified for the non-payment of the special rate until 12 months had expired.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, his hon. Friend who had moved the Amendment was a little inaccurate in one point. He stated that the Government were not supported on this question by any Members of the Liberal Party who were not in Office. As a matter of fact, they were supported by six. However, it was not his desire to bring these questions before the House. He might say on this Amendment that it was the general intention of the Government to support the Bill as it came out of the Standing Committee. The Amendments which he himself had put down where entirely promises which he had made in Committee, with the general approval, or at any rate no expressed opposition, and Amendments, especially in the earlier portion of the Bill, which were consequential on the decisions come to on the later part of the Bill by the Committee. But with regard to the substantial questions, the intention of the Government was, whether the objection was taken from their own Benches or from the Benches opposite, to support the Bill as it left the Grand Committee; and he thought those who were present at the discussions in the Grand Committee would admit that this was a point upon which the Government were bound to support the Bill as it stood. He thought his hon. Friend had exaggerated the practical importance of this question. At the first election of Parish Councillors this question of the special rate would not occur at all. No special rate could be struck except by the Parish Council which was in existence. With regard to the subsequent elections, in order to be qualified to be on the Parish Council a man must have paid his poor rate. His hon. Friend talked of importing a new disqualification. His own speech showed how very small this new disqualification would be. The special rate was not included in the poor rate, but it was on the same paper, and it certainly was in the highest degree unlikely that a man would pay his poor rate, which would amount to some shillings, and postpone paying the special rate which would amount probably to so many pence. If he did so, and did not pay that special rate within the year, in that case he could be disqualified. That was how the matter stood. He did not strongly argue whether this raised a great principle or not. He was bound to say he did not think it did. He thought they took the general current of the law as they found it, and at present the payment of rates was required as a qualification. He did not think that it hampered them in the least with regard to future legislation. He differed rather on the question of principle from the Committee, but he did not argue it on principle now. As he had said, they took legislation as they found it. The Government supported this clause in the Grand Committee, and they most certainly should support it now.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) hoped his hon. Friend would not go to a Division on this matter, because he thought they might be able to practically amend the clause. He himself had given notice of an Amendment to place the whole of the three rates in the same position, and to give 12 months' grace for the whole of the three, which would be a most beneficial change of the law. This was a matter which very seriously affected the fishing population of Scotland. They did pay their rates, but not until after the 20th of June. In the town of Wick out of 3,000 ratepayers less than 1,000 paid before the 20th June, and about 2,000 paid in the beginning of September, when they came home from the fishing. These 2,000 men who had not paid their rates were disqualified and could not vote, so that the burgh of Wick lost every year two-thirds of the Parliamentary electors because they could not pay on the 20th June. He thought the Government should carry the principle further and give these fishermen until September to pay the local, the county, and the poor rates. Although he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman as a general rule that they should support the decision of the Committee he would point out that this was a decision where the Scotch Members were overwhelmed. There was a majority of the Scotch Members in favour of placing the whole three rates in the one position, but the minority of Scotch Members, aided by the English Members, outvoted the Scotch majority. If his hon. Friend would withdraw his Amendment he (Dr. Clark) would move his Amendment to place the special, the poor, and the consolidated rates in the same position.

*THE **LORD ADVOCATE** (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) did not know whether this would be the proper time to say anything on the Amendment which the hon. Member for Caithness intended to propose. The hon. Member's Amendment involved a substantial alteration of the Registration Law. It inferred an alteration of the Registration Acts as they bore on the question of disqualification at present. The proposal was not only to take up matters outside the Bill, but to deal with Parliametary registration and County Council registration, and, of course, it would be for Mr. Speaker to say whether such Amendments could be moved looking to the rulings which he had already given with regard to the proposed introduction of matters which were outside the scope of the Bill.

*MR. **HOZIER** (Lanarkshire, S.) desired to say that his Amendment in the Grand Committee was carried by 46 to 28, and there were only 10 English Members who voted; therefore, there was a decided majority of Scottish Members in favour of this provision.

Question put, and agreed to.

DR. CLARK moved, after the word "payment," to insert the words "Poor rate, local rate, or." The object of the Amendment, he explained, was to place the three rates in the same position, and to give a longer time than the 20th of June. As far as the Amendment of the hon. Member for South Lanarkshire was concerned, it was carried in the Grand Committee by a majority of Scotch Members, but the Amendment moved by the hon. Member for East Aberdeen to apply the same principle to the other two rates was lost by the minority of the Scotch Members and English Members who were whipped up for that special occasion.

MR. BUCHANAN said, this was a similar Amendment to the one he moved in the Grand Committee, the object being to make the clause generally consistent, so that the extension of time with regard to the non-payment of rates should apply to the whole of the rates under this Bill, and not to one only.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a Bill to re-cast the local government, and I do not think it is competent under such Bill to alter the existing law dealing with the subject of local elections and registration. I think the hon. Gentleman would be out of Order in attempting to deal with the Registration Law.

Mr. CALDWELL: May I submit that it really does not alter the Registration Law itself?

*Mr. SPEAKER: It expressly does so, on the showing of the hon. Gentleman himself. It is, therefore, out of Order.

Mr. RENSHAW moved to insert, at the end of the first sub-section of Clause 10, an Amendment to the effect that it should be the duty of the clerk of the Parish Council, one week before the time fixed for the nomination of candidates for any election of Parish Councillors, to prepare a list of parish electors who had failed to make payment of the rates within the specified period, and to transmit a copy of that list forthwith to the Returning Officer, and any votes tendered by any elector named in such list should at any such election be disallowed, unless the elector instantly verified his right to vote by the production of a receipt duly signed and dated within the specified period. He said that some assessors thought difficulties would arise as to who was to decide the question involved in the clause unless such an Amendment were inserted. It would be exceedingly inconvenient to have the question discussed in the polling booth, and therefore the Returning Officer ought to have ample notice of the manner in which his duty should be discharged.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 27, at end, insert—

> "It shall be the duty of the parish clerk, on the expiry of one year from the date on which the demand note was issued, to prepare a list of those persons on the roll who have failed to make payment of the special rate within the specified period, and he shall supply a copy of such list to the Presiding Officer, who shall delete such names from the roll of parish electors, and shall disallow the vote tendered by such persons unless the voter instantly verified his right to vote by the production of a receipt duly signed and dated within the said period of one year."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, the Government would accept the Amendment, as a person was by the Bill not disqualified from being upon the Register through non-payment of the special rate, but was simply disqualified from voting. It was very desirable that the Returning Officer should have information on which he could act.

Dr. CLARK expressed the opinion that the word "instantly" would make it impossible to work the clause. A person might not have the receipt for payment in his pocket, and he could not, therefore, produce it instantly to verify it. He should suggest that "instantly" be omitted.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour said, that "instantly verified" was a familiar legal phrase.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member move the omission of the word "instantly?"

Dr. CLARK: Yes.

Amendment to the Amendment agreed to.

Sir C. PEARSON moved, after the word "verified," to insert the words "prior to the close of the poll."

Amendment to the Amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Mr. PARKER SMITH moved, in page 4, line 29, leave out from "more," to end of sub-section. He said, if the Amendment were accepted the sub-section would simply read—

> "Each parish elector may at any poll for the election of a Parish Council give one vote and no more."

The Bill proposed to have the foreign system of *scrutin de liste*, and to allow an elector to give a vote for any number of candidates. That system had been strongly objected to in this country, and had been done away with wherever it had existed. Some precaution was necessary to prevent the opinion of the majority having all the representation on the Council, and the opinion of the minority having none at all. While political questions would not enter into these elections there might be burning questions, such as the management of parish charities, rights of way, and leasing land for allotments, on which it would be mischievous if the minority had no representation. The danger was partly provided against in the Bill by an option being given of dividing a parish into wards. But as that power was merely optional he had put down an Amendment to provide that it should be compulsory for a parish to be divided into wards containing not more than three members, which was, perhaps, the most practical way of doing it. That was the most graceful way of doing it. He had not proposed any scheme by this Amendment. Of course, the principle was plain, and if everybody was given a single vote it would be a more satisfactory development that they should be able to transfer that vote from one candidate to another. That could easily be provided for by a subsequent Amendment; but he felt that this question as to how the elections were to be carried on in the Parish Councils was so important that it was at any rate necessary to bring it before the House.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 29, to leave out from the word "more," to the end of Sub-section (2), of Clause 10.—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that he would hardly like to enter upon so large a question as the representation of minorities under the eye of his right hon. Friend below the Gangway, and he must fall back upon the statement that he had voted on every possible occasion against the principle contended for. He would not support this principle of compulsory plumping, the principle imposed in Birmingham and Glasgow, under the system of representation between the Reform Bill of 1865 and the Reform Bill of 1885. He did not suppose there was any Member in the House at present who had not made up his mind on the question. The right hon. Gentleman below the Gangway had made statements in reference to the question of principle. Upon that principle they had all by this time decided one way or another, and were quite prepared to say whether or not they wished to have it introduced into the Scotch Parish Councils. His own opinion was as strongly against it there as elsewhere, and he thought he should best consult the wishes of the Committee by merely saying that the Government would support the Bill as it stood.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, that the representation of minorities was rather a large question to start at this period of the Session. He did not think in the circumstances, and seeing the condition of the House, that, having already expressed his sentiments on the question, he need express them again on the present occasion, although he must confess he was much astonished at what he had heard, especially when his right hon. Friend, in defending his position, gave as a satisfactory reason for the ground he took that he had himself always voted the other way. However, he would not enter further, as he had said, upon so important a question at this period of the Session.

MR. PARKER SMITH said, he did not propose to divide on this Amendment, because subsequent Amendments dealt with the point.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) moved to omit the words after "not," down to "be," in line 36. The question was in reference to the date 1st January, 1895, and the provision in Section 57 rendered it unnecessary to insert a date in this place.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 35, to leave out from the word "not," to the word "be," in line 36.—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Question put, and negatived.

MR. RENSHAW moved to leave out the words "after the 1st day of January, 1895," in relation to the date when the Registers should be made up, and after which any woman should not be disqualified by marriage from being registered on a County Council, Municipal, or Parish Council Register.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "after the 1st day of January, 1895."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that in the event of the Bill becoming law by the 1st of September, there would be sufficient time for making up the Registers so as to include the newly-enfranchised voters. If that was to be done it was of course desirable it should not be delayed till the 1st of January. He thought the wishes of hon. Members would be best consulted by saying that the words in question would be taken out elsewhere.

Mr. PARKER SMITH urged that there could be no harm in taking them out now. By putting it off to the future, expense and trouble might be incurred, whereas if the words were taken out now no alteration of the roll would be required.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said that, looking at the great number of persons concerned in being placed upon the Registers, it would be better not to draw a line now unless it were shown to be necessary.

Mr. CALDWELL pointed out that, the roll would be made up for November, and that there was no reason why women should be disqualified from voting for the Parish Councils. They would not be put upon the first roll, because that would have to be made up in time for November, but they could be upon the second roll. That appeared to be the simple reason for the Amendment—that women should be put upon the roll, and he thought the Government would do well to accept.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, if it was desired by the House, the Government would consent to omit the words.

Question put, and negatived.

*Mr. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) moved to substitute the word "qualification" for "property," which he considered a disfranchising expression, in respect to the proviso in Clause 11,

"that a husband and wife shall not both be registered in respect of the same property."

The word he objected to was a disfranchising expression, because a property might comprise and confer several qualifications, and if that word were left in here, it would only be the owner who would be qualified to vote, without any regard to minor qualifications. He would venture again to ask the right hon. Gentleman the question he put to him in Grand Committee: If the word "property" were to be left in, what was to become of a man who happened to marry his landlady, and whether the unfortunate occupier of the house would not be disfranchised immediately? The Government ought to give the Amendment their favourable consideration.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 39, to leave out the word "property," and insert the word "qualification."—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'property' stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that there never was the slightest doubt about the intention of the Government, which from first to last was that there should be only one vote for one property, and that the wife, as owner, and the husband, as tenant, should not have two votes. It was not necessary to emphasise the point with reference to this Amendment. Persons who came up to London were sometimes cautioned against taking advice without examining it very carefully. The intention of the Government was expressed quite clearly in Committee, and he wished to make it clear now: they had no wish to allow a double vote in respect of the same property in the case of a husband and wife any more than in the case of any two other persons. The Government conceived that that intention was secured by the words in the Bill, and for this reason it was desirable to retain them.

Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) could see no ground why the Secretary for Scotland should have run away from an Amendment which he himself put down in Committee, nor why he should now oppose the Amendment. His own Amendment on the same subject in Committee he had withdrawn, under the belief that the Government would stick to their own Amendment; but the Secretary for Scotland, having moved it in a most eloquent speech, suddenly dropped it without any apparent reason. Some remark was interjected, and immediately upon that the right hon. Gentleman turned round and said he was acting after having consulted with one of the cleverest assessors in Scotland, whose opinion had been taken. It was stated that the Amendment had been suggested to the Government by a gentleman well-qualified as an assessor, so that it had not been hastily prepared. But, having withdrawn his own Amendment on the same point, the Government let theirs go. This clause enacted that a woman should not be disqualified by marriage; but the insertion of the word "property" did disqualify her in certain circumstances. It was never contemplated that marriage should be a disqualification. He hoped the Government would re-consider their determination and would accept the Amendment moved by his hon. Friend opposite.

MR. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) said, the right hon. Gentleman had given a very singular reason for opposing this Amendment; he objected to two persons voting for the same property. But the Secretary for Scotland must be aware that there were hundreds and thousands of cases in which two persons voted for the same property. It was simply in the case of husband and wife that this ridiculous distinction was to be maintained. Where they were respectively owner and occupier it seemed ridiculous that this restriction should be imposed; and as the clause provided that marriage should not be a disqualification, it ought to be carried out to the logical conclusion. In cases of *bonâ fide* ownership and occupation by husband and wife they should each have the benefit of their separate qualifications. He thought the Government would do well to agree to the wishes expressed on both sides of the House and accept the Amendment.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 124; Noes 71.—(Division List, No. 217.)

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 5, line 10, leave out "burgh," and insert "municipal."

Line 12, after "burgh," insert "or police burgh."

Line 15, after "wards," insert "(1)."

Line 17, after "wards," insert—

"and (2) if and where a landward parish or a part of any parish is co-extensive with a police burgh or part thereof, and is divided into parish wards."

Line 29, leave out from "registered," to end of Sub-section, and insert "duly qualified."

Line 33, leave out from the beginning to the first "the," in line 34.

Line 34, after "assessors," insert "or other persons."

MR. RENSHAW moved, in page 6, line 11, to leave out "county" and insert "sheriff." He had raised this point in Committee, which was that the roll of electors ought not to pass into the possession of the county clerk, but ought to remain in the possession of the sheriff clerk, as the proper party to distribute the rolls was the sheriff clerk, and not the county clerk. He had since been confirmed in the opinion by inquiries he had made on the subject from various official sources. The county clerk of the County Councils had informed him that "county clerk" must have been inserted in the Bill by mistake, as there was no provision in it for the handing over of the Register to the county clerk for distribution. Under the present law, with regard to the Parliamentary roll and the county roll, it was the sheriff clerk that had the duty of delivering copies thereof, or parts thereof, to any person applying for same on payment of a fee.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 11, to leave out the word "county" and insert the word "sheriff."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'county' stand part of the Bill."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the scheme of Parish Councils which the Government proposed to bring into operation was that the Parish Councils should form part of a hierarchy of county government extending from the county as a whole downwards to the parish. That being so, it seemed to the Government that the person with whom the Parish Councils would naturally be brought into relations would be the county clerk, who, as clerk to the County Council, would have the duty of putting into motion the machinery for the elections, and that, therefore, he would have possession of the roll for administrative purposes. However, since the Amendment had been moved in Committee, the Government had made inquiries of Local Authorities with a view the ascertaining the most convenient course; and if they came to be satisfied that the course suggested in the Amendment was a proper one, they would have the Amendment made in another place.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 6, line 14, after "burgh," insert "or police burgh."

On Motion of Mr. RENSHAW, the following Amendment was agreed to :—

Page 6, line 16, after "shall," insert "subject to revision in Section 10."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to :—

Page 6, line 24, at end, insert—

"(3) A County Council Electoral Division (exclusive of any police burgh or part of a police burgh comprised therein) so far as within a parish shall be a parish ward, or shall be divided into two or more parish wards of the parish."

MR. PARKER SMITH moved, in page 6, line 25, to leave out from "Council," to "from," in line 30, and insert "shall." As the Bill stood it was optional for the County Council, looking to the circumstances of the parish, to decide whether it should be divided into wards or not. Upon the principle which he had explained a short time ago, and which he would not go into again, it ought to be compulsory that the parish should be divided into wards in all cases; and that those wards should return either three, two, or one Parish Councillors, but that in no case should there be more than three returned for any ward.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 25, to leave out from the word "Council," to the word "from," in line 30, and insert the word "shall."—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words down to the word 'may,' in line 30, stand part of the Bill."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the Government desired that the County Council should not be hampered in any respect in the arrangement of the wards of parishes. The Bill said that if the County Council were "satisfied after due local inquiry," they might decide that there should be five Parish Councillors for each parish, or divide the parish into wards, returning one, two, or three Parish Councillors. The Government were prepared to leave the matter to a strong Local Authority like the County Council, who, however, were not to act until they had consulted local opinion.

Question put, and agreed to.

*MR. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) moved, in page 6, line 30, after "may" insert "with the approval of the Board." What he wanted was that instead of the County Council being entrusted absolutely with the duty of dividing a parish into wards, it should discharge that duty "with the approval of the Board." He knew that some of the supporters of the Government agreed with him on this point.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 30, after the word "may," to insert the words "with the approval of the Board." —(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that if the words "with the approval of the Board" meant anything, they meant approval given after full cognizance of the facts. That meant that a local inquiry must be made in every parish in Scotland. The Bill would place on the Board many grave duties, and to throw on the Board the absolute necessity of local inquiries in parishes about which the Board, as a Board, could have little local knowledge, was a proposition he could not ask the House to entertain.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to :—

Page 6, line 32, after "divided," insert "subject to the provisions of this section."

Line 33, leave out from "expedient," to "and," in line 35.

Line 36, after the second "and," insert "shall thereafter by order."

Page 7, line 5, after "and," insert "shall thereafter by order."

MR. RENSHAW moved to omit the words "second and subsequent" from Clause 14 in order to raise the question as to whether or not it was desirable to have an election earlier than in the autumn of 1895, when the next election of County Councils takes place. He admitted fully the manner in which the Government had recognised the impossibility of holding the first election of Parish Councils this year, but he would still say that to hold it in the spring of next year meant very hurried preparation, an imperfect roll, and great expense. He had been at pains to inquire what that expense would be. In Lanarkshire he found that the additional expense of an election in the spring for Parish Councils only would amount to £2,322.

The county clerk of Midlothian, to whom he had written, had told him that the cost of the election in the County of Midlothian, the new Register, list of women voters, &c., would amount to £870. That was for the county, apart from the Royal and Parliamentary burghs therein. The population of that county, excluding the Royal and Parliamentary burghs and police burghs, was about 87,000. Taking the whole population of Scotland at 4,000,000, they could arrive by a simple arithmetical sum at the probable additional cost of these elections for the whole of Scotland. The calculation showed that it would cost not less than £40,000, in addition to the expense of the autumn election of County Councils. Was it desirable to put the country to the trouble and the turmoil of an additional election, and to the expenditure of £40,000 of local funds, in order to bring six months earlier into existence Parish Councils, which must come into existence in the autumn? On these grounds he moved his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 31, to leave out the words "second and subsequent."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'second and subsequent' stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he did not think the roll would be more imperfect in the spring than at the autumn election. His hon. Friend had told them that certain people who, he was ready to admit, were competent authorities, had informed him that the election would be expensive; but these officers were county officials, not belonging to the class of people this Bill was enfranchising, and it was not from such officials that the Government were going to take their idea as to when Parish Councils were to come into existence. The Government reluctantly, but for very good reasons of an administrative character, had consented to defer the elections from autumn this year until April next year, but they could not let the prospect of the election go on receding any further from the eyes of the residents in the parishes of Scotland.

Mr. MAXWELL said, they were as desirous as the right hon. Gentleman that Parish Councils should be established in Scotland, but the question was whether it was desirable that Scotland should pay between £30,000 and £40,000 in order that they should be created eight months earlier than if the first election took place in the autumn of 1895. He thought Scotland would accept the blessing of Parish Councils more gladly if she had not to pay this extra £30,000 or £40,000 for it. The Secretary for Scotland had thrown some doubt on the figures given by the Member for Renfrewshire; but the authorities to whom that hon. Gentleman had gone were the most reliable that could be found on the question, and he would ask if the Government themselves had taken the trouble to inquire and ascertain what the additional cost would be? In two counties in which he was interested estimates had been made, and they bore out very nearly the figures given by the Member for Renfrewshire. He thought the Parish Councils would be recognised as great blessings in Scotland if they could be obtained without such a large expenditure of money.

Sir C. PEARSON said, the Secretary for Scotland seemed entirely to have misconceived the point of the Member for Renfrewshire in writing to those authorities. He did so not to ask their opinion as to the propriety of bringing this Bill into operation earlier or later, but to ascertain the probable cost of what he might call the bye-election in the spring of 1895. The gentlemen consulted were the most competent authorities in Scotland to express an opinion on that question. The Secretary for Scotland was challenged in Committee to say whether the Government had formed any estimate of the cost of their new proposal. That was some weeks ago, and the Government had had ample time to consult authorities on the subject. If they had done so, they would probably have gone to the same sort of authorities whom his hon. Friend had consulted. He would ask, therefore, whether the Government were in a position to challenge the grave and serious statement made by his hon. Friend that the spring elections would cost the country between £40,000 and £50,000? If the Government had no better figures to supply them with, the question arose whether it was worth while for six months more of the existence of the Parish Council to incur this heavy expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman might believe him that no one on the Opposition side of the House any more than on the Ministerial side had the smallest desire to delay the Bill coming into operation. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of this promised election receding from the eyes of the people of Scotland. But why did it recede? Because, he ventured to say, the Government were convinced that they had proposed an impossibility in the Bill as originally brought in. Whether or not it was worth while to spend £40,000 or £50,000 to bring Parish Councils into operation six months earlier was a matter as to whether the people of Scotland should make up their minds. As he had said in Committee the question was one really of administration, the responsibility for which must rest on the Government. Members of the Opposition had done no more than their duty in raising and laying before the country this question.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it was rather surprising to hear such an attack upon and objection to the April election. It was decided upon with the unanimous assent of the Committee. The Government had believed, and still believed, that it would have been perfectly possible to have the first election this autumn. Others doubted it, and a suggestion was made by the Member for Bute (Mr. Graham Murray) and assented to by the Government to hold the election next spring. The Bill was re-cast to meet that change, and they could not now turn it all upside down. He could not say that the Government had got reliable figures, because it was impossible to do so; but they knew the kind and quality of the work to be done, and they believed the cost would not be serious, as the difference was not that of the whole cost of an additional election, but of the cost of having it in the spring instead of six months later.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the Lord Advocate rather led the House to understand that it was a concession to the wishes and desires of the Opposition that the election had been put off to next spring. That was not the case. It was a concession to certain practical and insurmountable difficulties which they had pressed on the attention of the Government. Both sides were animated by the desire to see the Bill brought into operation as soon as it was practically possible to do so, and the only question was—how soon? and what was the expense incident to one particular plan or the other. His hon. Friend (Mr. Renshaw) had come to the conclusion, basing his opinion on competent authorities, that the Government plan would cost over £30,000; and was it worth while for six months' additional enjoyment of the blessings of Parish Councils to put the country to that cost? However, it was for the Government to decide, and he would advise his hon. Friend to leave the whole responsibility to them, and not divide the House upon his Amendment. If he did his hon. Friends opposite might go to Scotland and attempt to make out that the hon. Member (Mr. Renshaw) had wished to put off as long as possible the time when the parochial elections in Scotland should take place. He did not think his hon. Friend should run that risk, and he (Mr. Balfour) did not mean to run it if the Government would not accept the Amendment.

MR. CALDWELL said, it had apparently been overlooked by the other side that, according to the way in which the Bill had been framed in the Standing Committee, it would be competent for the Municipal Authorities in Scotland in making up the new Registers in November to make them up with the new Register. The Town Councils could make up the roll in November, which would do for the Parish Council Register. That would obviate the necessity of spending at least half the £40,000.

*MR. HOZIER said, that hon. Members opposite seemed to have an idea that the Opposition had gained this as a concession. As a matter of fact, it was the City of Glasgow which obtained the postponement. It was because the City Authorities protested so strongly against the autumn election that exceptional arrangements were proposed for Glasgow, which in turn were resisted with such vehemence by both sides on the Committee that the whole thing had to be abandoned.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. PARKER SMITH said, he wished to move an Amendment to insert, after "burghal,"

"or for a parish or part of a parish co-extensive with a police burgh or part of a police burgh."

He put this forward because he was puzzled by the clause. He had thought the Government had forgotten their pledges and did not intend to deal with police burghs, and to put elections there on the same footing as elections in other places. He had discovered that they had fulfilled their pledge, but had hidden away the provision they had introduced. They had not given the subject a section of its own, but had hidden it away at the end of another section. He was sensitive for the honour of the police burghs, hence this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 8, line 35, after the word "burghal," to insert the words

"or for a parish or part of a parish co-extensive with a police burgh or part of a police burgh."—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he was sure the hon. Member would not think that the Government meant any disrespect to this important subject. They, however, thought the Amendment unnecessary, because it was covered by a provision which dealt with the very case. The last six lines of the clause to which he referred covered the case.

MR. PARKER SMITH said, those lines did substantially cover the Amendment; therefore, he would not press the proposal.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 8, line 39, leave out "ninety-five," and insert "ninety-eight."

MR. PARKER SMITH said, the effect of the next Amendment he wished to move would be to leave the County Council election out of the clause. As the clause stood, it dealt with certain Amendments of procedure both in regard to Parish Council elections and County Council elections. It was passed at a time when they were expecting and hoping to deal with a large number of questions concerning County Councils. Subsequently, pressure of time obliged them to leave out all those provisions dealing with the various Amendments of the Act of 1889, which many of them thought some of the most important parts of the Bill. Part of this clause was the only survival of those Amendments. They had been promised as definitely as possible in the future a Bill dealing with these matters in regard to County Councils. He had not the slightest objection to any provisions bearing on County Councils contained in any of these clauses. He did not think the provisions urgent, though they were in the right direction. They would be in place in a new Bill, but they were out of place here, being no part of a measure which proposed to deal with the constitution and election of Parish Councils. They should be left out of the Bill, and held over until they came to consider the question of the County Councils next year.

Amendment proposed, in page 9, line 42, to leave out the words "in a county of County Councillors and." — (*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it was quite true that mention was here made of County Councils, and the reason for that was obvious. In this Bill the method of procedure for the election of Parish Councils was assimilated to that for the election of County Councils. The elections would be on the same day and according to the same methods. If it were for no other purpose than that of giving necessary guidance as to the method of carrying out Parish Council elections, County Council elections should be here mentioned.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Mr. PARKER SMITH, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 10, line 9, leave out from "election," to "every," in line 10.

Line 27, leave out "county electoral division or."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 10, line 28, at end, add—

"And provided also that such notices shall take effect in the order in which they are delivered."

MR. W. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe) said, that on Clause 19 he wished to move an Amendment to enable the electors to elect any person to a Parish Council who was either a parochial elector or who for 12 months immediately preceding had resided within the parish or within three miles thereof. His attention was to restore the Bill to the form in which it was originally introduced by the Government; therefore, he was sure the Government could not meet the Amendment with any objection to it on its merits. It was undoubtedly their deliberate judgment that this provision should stand in the Bill; moreover, its adoption would make the Bill in harmony with the English Local Government Act. Though he desired to support the findings of the Grand Committee he must point out that the alteration from the original proposal was carried at a meeting at which less than one-third of the Members of the Grand Committee were present. When, in conjunction with that fact, they remembered that the original proposal found a place in the English Act he did not think it unreasonable to raise the matter again on the Report stage to see if the judgment of the House would not rather confirm the view taken of the matter in the English Bill than that taken in the Grand Committee. In the consideration of the English Bill this matter was debated at great length, and it was decided that the greatest freedom of choice should be given to the parish electors. That was in harmony with later practice, and on that ground especially he urged the Amendment. Speaking as a Scotsman, he thought it was rather hard that trust in the people in England should be carried so far, but that in Scotland they were not going to trust the Scottish people to the same extent as they did the English people. It was to be remembered that where they limited the right of election of parochial electors they would be excluding a large number of ratepayers who might not yet have arrived at the stage of being electors, because the qualification for the electorate was governed by the Registration Act, and it might be two and a-half years after a man had gone to live in a parish before he became a parochial elector. The Bill itself did not limit the right of election to ratepayers, and a person who was disqualified for voting for the non-payment of the special rate might be perfectly qualified to be elected a member of the Parish Council. There was not the faintest chance that the parochial electors would ever elect a pauper to represent them, or any person who was undesirable, and Parliament was doing much the sounder thing and acting much more in harmony with Liberal principles and the general tendency of their legislation if it gave freedom of choice all round. He was only urging, too, that should be done for Parish Councils which was done for School Boards. Both men and women had been elected for School Boards who were not themselves electors, and no grievance had been felt in that matter. He thought that as the Parish Councils were to take over the work of the Parochial Boards it was wise to give a very wide choice, and especially in view of the desirableness of having women as members of the wards.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 19, after the word "electors," to insert the words—

"or persons who have, during the 12 months next preceding the election, resided in the parish, or within three miles thereof, and who are of lawful age, and not subject to any legal incapacity."—(*Mr. W. M'Laren.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he was not able to pick and choose in this matter, although, of course, it was quite another thing for other Members. He considered himself bound by the decision of the Grand Committee. The position was this—36 hon. Members voted in the Standing Committee, which was a large attendance for a Grand Committee, and upon a Division there voted 27 to 9. If they came to Scotch Members—and he thought under the circumstances he might make some analysis of the voting—they found that there were 23 Scotch Members on one side and eight on the other. Therefore they might analyse the numbers as they liked, but would not find a majority of the Party on the side of the Amendment of the hon. Member. He agreed with a great deal of what the hon. Member had said, and thought the proposal was a good one for England, and a very necessary one. But his hon. Friend had ignored the differences between the position of England and of Scotland. In England small parishes of under 500 population were to be counted by the thousand, and it was a very difficult matter to obtain competent persons to represent them. Then, again, there were a considerable number below 300 and 200 population, while in Scotland, in the

County of Midlothian, there were only three parishes below 500; in Elgin, out of 19 parishes, only one was under 500, and in the great County of Inverness, with 32 parishes, there was only one under 500. He thought the difference in the position of affairs as between England and Scotland was sufficient to justify hon. Members in taking a strong view on this subject. Although there were a number of Members absent from the Committee upon the occasion when the decision was arrived at, he believed that had they all been present the voting would have been proportionately the same.

Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) said, he agreed with the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, and if he went into the Lobby he should certainly support him. Of course he quite understood the principle upon which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland acted. He had necessarily to support the decision of the Grand Committee, but while that decision might bind the right hon. Gentleman and the Government, it did not bind private Members. He objected altogether to these qualifications. There was no qualification for membership of the House of Commons, and he did not see why there should be any qualification for membership of a Parish Council. The Amendment of his hon. Friend was a step in the right direction, and if he would divide upon it he would go into the Lobby with him.

*__Mr. LUTTRELL__ (Devon, Tavistock) said, he should support the Amendment. The Secretary for Scotland, in opposing the Amendment, had stated that the parishes in Scotland being so much larger than the parishes in England, it was not possible to make a comparison, and that it was not necessary in Scotland to have an extension to three miles outside the parish. In some respects that was true, for there would be a wider choice in the larger parishes; but he would point out to his right hon. Friend that the principal arguments used for the three-mile extension in England were that there would often be people living just outside the parish who would have interests in the parish, and it was to include these that the three-mile extension was made. The larger the parish the larger would be the fringe of the parish, and consequently in these large Scotch parishes there would be more people with interests in the parish living just outside it. As the Bill now stood, it differed from the English Act in another respect—not only was there to be no extension to three miles, but the Councillors would only be chosen from the electorate. In England both the parishes and the districts were to be allowed to choose from the electorate and from residents of 12 months. Though on account of size the Scotch and English parishes did not bear exact comparison, no one could contend that the parishes of Scotland were larger than the districts of England. And if it be right that the districts of England should choose from residents, surely the Scotch parishes might. He was in favour of allowing the people to choose whom they pleased without restrictions, and it was because this Amendment went in that direction that he gave it his support. He would suggest, however, that if the Government could not accept the three-mile extension, they would allow people to choose from the residents of the parish as well as from the electorate.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire) said, the difficulty was that if members were elected who lived three miles away it was very unlikely that they would regularly attend the meeting of the Council. They had had experience of that kind in reference to the School Boards. He proposed to support the Mover of the Amendment if he would leave out the words relating to the three mile limit.

Mr. W. M'LAREN said, he would accept that Amendment to his Amendment.

Amendment amended, by leaving out the words "or within three miles thereof."

Question put, "That those words, as amended, be there inserted."

The House divided:—Ayes 37; Noes 99.—(Division List, No. 218.)

Mr. MAXWELL moved, in page 11, line 24, at end, insert—

> "Provided that a casual vacancy in a Parish Council and a vacancy in the office of Chairman shall not be filled unless notice, specifying that such vacancy is to be considered, has been issued to each Councillor at least seven days before the meeting."

The hon. Member said, his Amendment was one which dealt with the filling up of casual vacancies on Parish Councils. The first part of the clause dealt generally with the matter of notice, time, and place of meetings of the Parish

Councils. He agreed this was a matter which should be left in the hands of the Parish Councils, and that their hands should not be in any way tied. But a case might arise when it might be necessary for a Parish Council meeting to be suddenly summoned, and while he did not think it desirable that any hard or fast line should be laid down, he thought it well that in the case of the election of Chairman and the filling up of a casual vacancy some notice should be given.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 24, at end, insert—

"Provided that a casual vacancy in a Parish Council and a vacancy in the office of chairman shall not be filled unless notice, specifying that such vacancy is to be considered, has been issued to each Councillor at least seven days before the meeting."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Question put, and agreed to.

*Captain HOPE moved, in page 11, line 26, leave out "may" and insert "shall." He said that, on examining this clause, he thought that some difficulty might arise unless the word "shall" was substituted for "may." He ventured to submit for the consideration of the Government that the word "may" in the position in which it appeared would give rise to a great deal, not only of difficulty, but of friction. The Inspector of the poor of a parish might place the Parish Council in a very awkward position if it was left to him to say whether he would or would not act as clerk. He believed the intention to be that the Inspector should act, and at all events the clause would be the clearer if "shall" were substituted for "may."

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 26, to leave out the word "may," and insert the word "shall."—(*Captain Hope.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 11, line 27, leave out from "appointed," to "any," in line 28.

Line 34, at beginning, insert "Subject to the provisions of this Act."

Line 34, after "Council," insert "or in any office to which the Parish Council appoint a representative from their own number."

Mr. HOZIER moved, in page 11, line 40, after "number," insert "to be chairman during the tenure in office of the Council." He said, that in the Grand Committee upon the Bill the Division on this matter was so close that the Chairman had to give his casting vote. They must remember this had been the rule hitherto: that the Chairman of the Parochial Board was the representative on the district committee, and in a similar manner he had no doubt the Chairman of the Parish Council would, in all probability, be chosen as the representative on the district committee of the Parish Council, and, that being so, he thought it was desirable the Amendment should be adopted. If office was to be held only for one year, he thought that a knowledge of the duties would hardly be acquired before the term of office expired.

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 40, after the word "number," to insert the words "to be chairman during the tenure in office of the Council."—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. RENSHAW said, he hoped that, in view of the closeness of the Division that took place in the Committee upstairs, the Government would reconsider this matter. He attached very great importance to the proposal made by his hon. Friend, and gave it priority of position. When the matter was under discussion upstairs, he ventured to point out that in the case of School Boards the chairman was appointed for three years, and the principle had worked excellently, and no objection had ever been made to it. The result had been to secure, in the first place, the services of the best man on the School Board as its chairman, and, in the second place, to secure a continuity of policy during their tenure of office. Under these circumstances, he thought it would be unfortunate to expose the Chairman of the Parish Council to the possibility of annual change. It was argued upstairs that if a man was a good chairman he was sure to be reappointed. ["Hear, hear!"] The hon. Member said "Hear, hear!" and no doubt that would generally be the case, but not always. Very often a chairman had, in pursuance of a particular policy to be decided upon and carried out, to look ahead a bit, and in the line he took in connection with questions of local administration he would be hampered if he felt that a particular vote he gave might be made the instrument for turning him out of office. He could not see that there was anything to be gained by making the occupancy of the office so short. He imagined that the Council would only meet about once a month, and it would take some considerable time for the chairman to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the duties. He hoped the Government would reconsider the question. He felt more strongly about this, because the subsequent Amendment was in connection with the representative of the Parish Council upon the district committee; and as the probability was that the chairman would be appointed as the representative, he thought it most desirable they should continue him in office for the three years.

DR. MACGREGOR said, that if the chairman was a popular man he would be re-elected; and if he was unpopular, then the Council should have the power of removing him.

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, that was their case in a nutshell. Very great inconveniences occurred on Local Government Boards, and even more important Boards, from differences of opinion between the chairman and the members. Anyone who had been connected with local administration had never known, he thought, of an instance in which a man who was really trusted, and was an effective head of the body, had not been re-elected for the position, and where the re-election was not regarded as a service done to the body rather than a service done to the individual. He had not the slightest doubt that a good chairman would always be re-elected.

SIR H. MAXWELL (Wigton) said, he did not often find himself at variance with his hon. Friend behind him; but on this occasion he thought the Secretary for Scotland was the more Conservative of the two, and he certainly agreed with the right hon. Gentleman, who proposed to continue the same order of things that prevailed on Parochial Boards where the appointment was an annual one.

Question put, and negatived.

*MR. HOZIER said, he did not propose to move the omission of the whole of Sub-section 6, but he wished to move the omission of the latter part of it—namely, the words—

> "If an equal number of votes is given for two or more persons the Parish Council shall determine by lot which of these persons shall be chairman."

He could not help thinking there was a good deal too much of Ladas about this; therefore for that reason he moved to omit the latter part, from "If an equal number" down to "chairman." He would add that in the English Act, with regard to Parish Councils, there was no arrangement of this sort, and he could not see why this arrangement should be made with regard to Scotland.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that in this particular case there was no other mode available, as there was no one to give a casting vote; therefore, he thought the simplest way was to adopt the method proposed in the sub-section.

MR. HOZIER: It is not in the English Act.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): No; that Act leaves the case unprovided for.

MAJOR DARWIN (Staffordshire, Lichfield) asked if the right hon. Gentleman could not adopt the other plan that was brought forward—that was, that in case there had been a poll the candidate who obtained the largest number of votes at the poll should be the one selected as chairman. Election by lot was very objectionable if it could be avoided.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I think the Secretary for Scotland has an Amendment before this one—in line 9.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 12, line 9, leave out "ninety-four," and insert "ninety-five."

Page 12, line 10, leave out "all the Parish Councillors are elected," and insert "the first Tuesday of the month of December."

Amendment proposed, in page 12, line 11, to leave out from the word "re-election," to the end of Sub-section (6) of Clause 19.—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MAJOR DARWIN said, he only wished to say that the omission of the words would not meet the case.

MR. CALDWELL said, he would like to point out there was a difficulty here, because the elections took place by parish wards; and, as one might be elected in one ward and one in another, it would be difficult to determine the number of votes.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it appeared to him that the method suggested might be a fit one, but he did not think it would cover all possible cases. If, however, the House would be good enough to leave it in their hands, they would endeavour to introduce in another place some alternative that would cover all the cases.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. PARKER SMITH said, his Amendment had reference to Sub-section 7, which ran as follows:—

> "The representative from a Parish Council on a district committee of a County Council, or on the County Council, where a county is not divided into districts, shall be appointed annually at the statutory meeting of the Parish Council from among their own number."

"Or on the County Council where a county is not divided into districts" was a very clumsy phrase, and all through the Bill, wherever the district committee was mentioned, they found themselves encumbered with this extremely large and clumsy phrase. In dealing with the case of some of the small counties that were not divided into districts he thought it would be extremely awkward to have this large phrase, and that the difficulty could be met by leaving out the phrase and putting in the Definition Clause, at the end, a definition that stood in his name at the end of the Paper—namely,

> "The expression 'district committee of a County Council' shall include a County Council sitting as a district committee in cases where a county is not divided into districts."

His Amendment would have the effect of removing a most cumbrous phrase and putting it into the Definition Clause; therefore, he hoped the Amendment would be accepted.

Amendment proposed, in page 12, line 15, to leave out the words "or on the County Council, where a county is not divided into districts."—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or on the County Council' stand part of the Bill."

MR. RENSHAW said, there was one additional point he should like to urge in support of the view of the hon. Member for Partick (Mr. Parker Smith). By the insertion here of the phrase "or on the County Council where a county is not divided into districts"—at this place it might be considered to convey more than was intended; that was to say, it might be held to imply that under certain circumstances those appointed were appointed on the County Council for other purposes than those of a district committee. He thought the Amendment made it perfectly clear what the position really was, and conveyed precisely and exactly what the Government ought to provide for.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the hon. Member only applied the definition to one particular case, and as a similar expression occurred throughout the Bill he was afraid it would require a good deal of alteration of the Bill. This, also, had to be kept in view, that sometimes persons in reading a Bill did not look at the Interpretation Clause; they liked to have it "writ large," so that it might speak for itself. As the Bill at present stood, he was afraid the acceptance of the Amendment would not meet the case; but they would consider whether, without sacrificing clearness, the Amendment could be accepted. The other point mentioned by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Renshaw) should be looked into with the object of seeing what amount of change would be required in other parts of the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. RENSHAW said, the Amendment he had to propose was to omit the word "annually," for the purpose of inserting subsequently, after "at the," the word "first" before "statutory." The decision of the Committee upon this point was very dubious, because 19 voted one way and 19 voted the other; so that as there was an equality, very pronounced, against the scheme proposed in the Bill, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would now, in recognition of that fact, be prepared to accept the Amendment. This was a matter of great importance, and the duties of the office would never be properly performed unless there was continuity of office. The duties of the district committee had reference to public health and the administration of the roads of the district. They would have, perhaps, in the district 15 County Councillors who were members of the district committee by virtue of the fact that they were County Councillors. Say they had seven parishes in the district, they would have seven representatives added to the 15 County Councillors to form the district committee. They would have the responsible charge of administering all matters connected with the roads and the public health of the district, and there could not be the slightest doubt in the mind of anyone who had taken part in the operation of these district committees that those men who had been longest at it were the best-informed upon the intricate questions that came before them for settlement. He was perfectly certain about this: that if they wanted to do justice to the representatives of the Parish Councils, they must give them a longer tenure of office than one year. The members of these district committees were in office for three years, and therefore they would handicap the Parish Council representatives if they appointed them only for one year. He supposed he would be met with the statement that was made with regard to the appointment of the Chairman of the Parish Council, that if the representative was doing his duty he would be returned over and over again by the Parish Council. To that he would reply that, in the first place, the Parish Council would have no special cognisance of what was being done in the district committee; the meetings were not always published in the Press, and therefore what was done would not be circulated outside the limits of the committee itself; and, in the second place, though a man might be a most efficient administrator, and be doing his work well, he might be put on one side at the end of the year for another gentleman on the principle of fair play all round. That, he considered, would be an injury to the Parish Council. He therefore hoped the Government, having regard to the equal division on the question upstairs, would accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 12, line 16, to leave out the word "annually."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'annually' stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that undoubtedly it would be a great disadvantage if a good man was turned out to make room for an indifferent man; but what was more likely to happen was that a man might be chosen for some personal quality he possessed, but who might be a most inefficient representative, in which case the parish would be saddled with a person for three years who ought not to be their representative. On the other hand, when a Public Body got hold of a man who really did their work that man might continue to do their work as long as he wished. Under the circumstances of the equal division upstairs, he was able to take his own view, and that was in favour of annual elections.

Mr. MAXWELL said, he was very much disappointed at the statement of the Secretary for Scotland, because everyone acquainted with the working of district committees in Scotland knew perfectly well it was greatly to the advantage of the locality that the public representatives should be appointed to these district committees for three years. In some districts the Parish Council representatives would form half the district committee, so that they might have half that body going out of office at the end of every year. He would point out that a great part of the work was discharged by sub-committees, and if half of them were to be turned off these committees every year how were they to perform their work satisfactorily and efficiently? This, he could assure the House, was a very important matter, and it would tend to confuse the work of these district committees if the representatives were to be changed from year to year, and it must interfere with the continuity of the work.

Dr. MACGREGOR said, it appeared to him that the arguments used in favour of this Amendment were on all-fours with those used in the other case that had been disposed of, and that the House would be stultifying itself if it did not now decide in exactly the same way in which it decided before.

*Mr. CRAWFORD said, that as so much stress had been laid upon the close Division in the Committee, he would like to say he hoped the Government would adhere to the position they had taken up. He was rather surprised that hon. Friends of his should look upon the point as they did, as he thought they rather mistook the principle of the case. The members who represented Parish Councils on the County Council were much more in the position of delegates than were the ordinary members of County Councils. They were chosen not so much for general fitness for the administration of local government as for representing the views of their parishes on particular points. Accordingly, it was but just that the Parish Council should annually have an opportunity of sending to the County Council such men as they thought would represent the views of the Parish Council at the time.

*CAPTAIN HOPE said, he must entirely repudiate the idea that the members who represented Parochial Boards on the district committees were any more delegates than were the ordinary members of County Councils. Speaking from practical experience, he could only say that in cases in which the representatives of the Parochial Boards on the district committee over which he had the honour of presiding were constantly changed those representatives attended least and took the least interest in the work of the committee. In the majority of cases, however, Parochial Boards elected their representatives for the whole period of the existence of the district committee, and this, he thought, showed that they believed this to be the most reasonable and advantageous way of appointing their members. The case dealt with by the Amendment was stronger than that of the Parochial Board representatives on the district committee. The Parish Council would hold office for the same period as the district committee and the County Council, and it was therefore reasonable to ask that the representatives of the Parish Council should be appointed for the whole period of the joint existence of that Council and of the district committee. He hoped the Government would see their way to accept the Amendment.

MR. ANSTRUTHER said, he had accepted the declaration of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir G. Trevelyan), and was willing, as far as he was able, to concur in it—that the Government would at this stage of the Bill adhere to the decisions of the Committee, and especially to those decisions which were unanimously arrived at.

SIR G. TREVELYAN (interposing): I think my hon. Friend misunderstood what I said. I was speaking about the Amendments I myself brought forward, and my recollection of what I said is that, generally speaking, those Amendments were brought forward in order to fulfil the promises which had been accepted, if not unanimously, without any considerable objection.

MR. ANSTRUTHER said, he was referring to the right hon. Gentleman's statement about the admission of the words "second and subsequent." If the unanimity of the Committee had given a special title to the right hon. Gentleman to appeal to the House to support the Committee's decision on that point, the right hon. Gentleman had very slender ground for refusing the present Amendment when it had been rejected merely by the casting vote of the Chairman of the Grand Committee. He firmly believed that the Amendment, if adopted, would conduce to administrative efficiency, and he was supported in that view by the fact that several Members who habitually supported the Government had voted against them on this question in the Grand Committee.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he thought the most cogent argument used in favour of the Amendment was to be found in the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Lanark (Mr. D. Crawford). He had been more than surprised to hear the theory of delegation supported by that hon. Member, as there was no theory which he thought was more destructive of proper representative work than that.

*MR. D. CRAWFORD (interposing) remarked that the representatives of the Parish Councils on the district committees would be delegates, as they were not elected by the ratepayers, but appointed by the Parish Council.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he did not admit that they were delegates. He had been surprised to hear the hon. Member support the theory of delegation, as the whole of his Parliamentary career had been a worthy testimony in favour of the opposite theory. There was nothing more to be deprecated than the setting up of friction between different popularly-elected bodies, and yet, if

Parliament were to allow the Parish Council's representative to be changed annually in order that the Parish Council might send to the County Council a person not to represent the views he formed from a practical experience of the working of the district committee, but simply to represent the views put into him by the Parish Council, that would be nothing more nor less than giving the Parish Council an indirect control of the work of the district committee. The testimony of those who had been practically engaged in administrative work had been all one way, and, as far as the theoretical result was concerned, he thought it would be very often fruitful of friction and dissension. Even in the past friction between district committees and County Councils had not been absolutely unknown, and he thought that any provision which at all made likely a repetition of that state of things in the future was a bad one. Under these circumstances, he should certainly support the Amendment.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 106; Noes 37.—(Division List, No. 219.)

MR. RENSHAW moved, in page 12, to add at the end of line 18—

> "Provided always, that, in the case of parishes partly landward and partly burghal, he shall be appointed by the landward committee from among their own number."

He said the landlord representatives on the district committee were elected not to represent the interests of the Parish Council, but to represent the interests of the landward part of the parish. In the case of a parish partly landward and partly burghal the people within the burgh did not contribute to the cost of maintaining the roads in the county or to the public health rates, and it was only those represented by the landward committee who did contribute to them. It was only fair to ask that those who were appointed by the Parish Council to give votes which might decide the expenditure on the formation and maintenance of roads and the manner in which the public health laws should be carried into effect should be those who had the responsibility of paying the rates for maintaining the roads and carrying out the Public Health Act.

Amendment proposed, in page 12, line 18, after the word "number," to insert the words—

> "Provided always, that, in the case of parishes partly landward and partly burghal, he shall be appointed by the landward committee from among their own number."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the Amendment was not necessary. By the Act of 1889 it was provided that in the case of parishes partly landward and partly burghal, the representative must be a ratepayer, and he would, therefore, have county interests. It appeared to the Government that this was a sufficient safeguard of the interests which it was desired to represent.

*MR. HOZIER remarked that there were a good many people connected with parish and county government who, as the Lord Advocate had said, liked to have things "writ large," and who might make terrible mistakes if they had to refer from one Act to another. It would therefore be well to assent to the Amendment.

MR. MAXWELL (Dumfries-shire) said, that, now that a division had been formed between the members representing the landward part of a place and the members representing the burgh, it was only right that the landward committee should have the appointment of their representatives on the district committee. The Parish Council might in certain cases not altogether represent the landward part. It was desirable that the matter should be made quite clear in the Bill.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the effect of the Local Government Act of 1889 was to limit the representation to county ratepayers, and, that being so, the object of the Amendment was very much met.

SIR C. PEARSON thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not apprehended the exact bearing of the Act of 1889. The only distinction that was drawn in 1889 was between the burghs on the one hand, and the county on the other, and it was considered expedient to enact that care should be taken that it should be a county ratepayer who was appointed a representative. In the present Bill, they were subdividing the Parish Councils. The landward part of it was the only part of the parish and of the Parish Council which was directly interested by way of having to pay money in the shape of Public Health rates, the Roads Management Acts, and so on. In a parish in the County of Renfrew, the population of the burghal portion was over 34,000, and the landward population 7,907. That parish was united for Poor Law purposes, for the purposes of this Act, and all purposes; but the only part of the parish which had a direct interest in the roads, and in the Public Health administration of the parish as a whole, was the landward part of it with a population of 7,907. He submitted that it was not fair, or justified by any reference to the existing Local Government Act of 1889, that the selection of the persons who were to have the administration of road matters, and matters relating to Public Health, should be left not to those who alone were interested in these matters in the parish—that was the landward population—and that the landward population should be absolutely swamped by the 35,000 population, who had nothing in the world to do with it in the way of management or ratepaying. That was a simple fact which the Lord Advocate had failed to appreciate in the remarks he he had made. This was by no means a solitary instance, and he hoped the Government would reconsider what he trusted he might term the provisional decision they had already announced, and accept the Amendment which had been moved.

Dr. MACGREGOR thought they might very well trust the Local Bodies in this matter.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 40; Noes 112.—(Division List, No. 220.)

Mr. COCHRANE moved, in page 12, line 38, after Sub-section (d.), insert—

> "In any contract with the Council for the supply from land, of which he is owner or occupier, of stone, gravel, or other materials for making or repairing highways or bridges, or in the transport of materials for the repair of roads or bridges in his own immediate neighbourhood; or."

He pointed out that a similar clause to this appeared in the Roads and Bridges Scotland Act, it being enacted that a road trustee should not be disqualified by reason of having any interest in the land from which stone, gravel, or other materials were supplied. Under the County

Councils Act of 1889 road trustees were abolished, and, at the same time, this provision against disqualification was not re-enacted in the Scotch County Council Bill. The same thing happened in the case of the English County Councils Act, but in 1891 there was an amending Act for the English County Councils in which this sub-section was re-enacted. It was Sub-section 5, c. 63, of the Act of 1891, and it enacted that no person should be disqualified, if elected a member of the County Council, by reason of having any share or interest in any land from which materials were supplied for the repair of highway roads, and so on. In England a man was not disqualified under the County Councils Act, but in Scotland he was. In England, under the Parish Councils Bill, a man was not disqualified from being a Parish Councillor on account of supplying metal for the repair of roads and bridges, and so on. He instanced cases which had occurred where men who had previously supplied road metal had to discontinue doing so, so as not to disqualify themselves from a seat in the County Councils, the consequence being that the material had to be obtained at a much greater distance from the locality, and also at a much greater cost. If the Government would give any support to this proposal of his he would be glad to introduce a small Bill to amend the law relating to County Councils in the same respect. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 12, line 38, after Sub-section (d), insert—

> "In any contract with the Council for the supply from land, of which he is owner or occupier, of stone, gravel, or other materials for making or repairing highways or bridges, or in the transport of materials for the repair of roads or bridges in his own immediate neighbourhood; or."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir J. FERGUSSON observed that a much stronger case for introducing this provision existed in the case of a Parish Council than in the case of a County Council.

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that the analogies from England in the matter of County and Parish Councils appeared to be analogies which held here. If this question was introduced into a County

Council Bill, which he hoped to see before they were many years older, the Government would not resist it.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 13, line 10, leave out "eleventh day of December," and insert "fifteenth day of May."

Line 11, leave out, "ninety-four," and insert "ninety-five."

Line 20, leave out "constituted as at the passing of this Act."

Line 21, after "thereof and," insert "a Parish Council."

Line 23, leave out "thereof," and insert "of a Parochial Board."

Line 37, after "committee," insert "of the Parish Council."

Page 14, line 7, after "purpose," insert "and for the purpose of The Public Libraries Consolidation (Scotland) Act, 1887."

Line 8, before "may," insert "which."

Line 10, leave out "without," and insert "outwith."

MAJOR DARWIN moved, in page 14, line 20, to leave out from the word "increased," to the word "Council," inclusive, in line 21, and insert the words—

"(or, if the election takes place by wards, the members elected for each ward as a separate body) shall appoint to the Parish Council from their number according to rules to be framed by the Board."

He said, his Amendment was designed to meet two certain points. They were dealing with a case where the landward part had to be increased because the number of Parish Councillors was very small. Take the case of a landward part with three wards each returning one Parish Councillor and one additional member of the landward committee. Suppose also—which he hoped would not be the case—that the elections took place upon Party lines, it might well happen that two wards would return Conservatives and one Liberals. These six men, four Conservatives and two Liberals, might proceed to appoint three Parish Councillors. What he wanted to know from the Secretary for Scotland was whether, as the Bill stood, it gave these six men power to appoint three Conservatives, because, if so, he thought that would mean that the division of the parish into wards for the purpose of the election of Parish Councils was absolutely futile. He proposed, therefore, in order to secure minority representation, that the representatives should be elected to the Parish Council by the members of each ward. He also proposed that they should be elected according to Rules framed by the Board. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 14, line 20, to leave out from the word "increased," to the word "Council," inclusive, in line 21, and insert the words—

"or, if the election takes place by wards, the members elected for each ward as a separate body) shall appoint to the Parish Council from their number according to rules to be framed by the Board."—(*Major Darwin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'shall appoint' stand part of the Bill."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, the Bill laid down a system under which there would be a sufficient landward committee to form a respectable minority, and to that part of the enactment he did not imagine the hon. and gallant Gentleman took exception. Now they came to the duty of this landward committee. They had to send probably only one representative—at the outside two or three—to the Parish Councils, and these representatives were to be chosen by the entire body. He thought this was a case of *de minimis non curat.* He was not afraid of a majority of Conservatives sending three Conservatives to the Parish Councils, and he was not afraid of a Liberal majority taking the same course. The representatives would be sent merely for the purpose of Poor Law administration. It was not such a very inviting or acceptable office that any great partisan feeling would be exercised. He thought the election of one or two, or at the outside three, members of a Parish Council might be very safely left to the higher body, which in all only consisted of five or six members.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 14, line 21, after "appoint," insert "from their own number."

Page 14, line 22, after "Act," insert—

"And shall fill any casual vacancy occurring in the number of such Parish Councillors or in the landward committee."

Page 14, line 25, to leave out from "Council," to end of sub-section, and insert—

"The provisions of sub-sections two, three, five, and six of section nineteen of this Act shall apply to a landward committee with the substitution of the expression 'landward committee' for 'parish council' occurring therein.'"

Line 33, leave out "clause," and insert "section."

Line 34, after "of," insert "not fewer than."

Line 35, leave out "the," and insert "such."

Line 35, leave out "thereof."

Line 36, leave out "in addition to any powers conferred or transferred by other parts of this Act."

Mr. PARKER SMITH moved to strike out, in Clause 24, the words "or other public purposes," and to insert instead the words,

"and for any purposes connected with parish business or with the powers or duties of the Parish Council."

He explained that the Amendment had reference to the powers given to Parish Councils to provide buildings for parish and general local purposes. He urged that while the Councils should have perfectly full and free powers in this respect they should not go further, and therefore he proposed to substitute the words in the English Act for what he considered the somewhat vague words, "or other public purposes," now in the clause. Those words exactly defined the powers which Parish Councils should have. Nobody wished, of course, that they should have power to acquire buildings for a vast number of general public purposes which might be entirely outside their functions.

Amendment proposed, in page 14, line 40, to leave out the words "or other public purposes," and insert the words—

"and for any purposes connected with parish business or with the powers or duties of the Parish Council."—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, the clause as it stood gave the Council all necessary latitude to erect buildings for general purposes conducive to the advantage of the parish. He certainly would be unwilling that any Parish Council should have power to acquire buildings except for strictly parish purposes. The question was fully discussed by the Committee, who concluded that the words referred to in the clause were sufficient for the purpose in view, and they would provide a guarantee against any dangerous excess.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR admitted that while it would not be right to follow the English Act word for word, yet in cases where the circumstances of the two countries were alike, surely the same wording might be used in both measures. In this particular regard there was no distinction whatever to be drawn between Scotland and England as to providing buildings for parish purposes.

Mr. CALDWELL said, that Scotch parishes were larger than parishes in England.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, if that was so their larger area afforded greater reason against spending large sums upon central buildings from which, in the very nature of the case, people distant 20, 30, 40, or even 50 miles could derive but little benefit. The right hon. Gentleman had, in defending the wording of the Bill as it stood, told the House that the Parish Councils would be the best judge of their own wants, and that they were restrained from recklessly disposing of their funds by the fact that they could not levy beyond a 6d. rate. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot that they might borrow beyond that limit, and that a Parish Council while in power during a few months might mortgage their future funds for many years, and indulge in building speculations altogether beyond good policy, and their requirements. Surely that was a result which the House ought not to promote, and should provide against. The point in question as to the powers of Parish Councils with regard to expenditure in the erection of public buildings was fully examined into and discussed in the progress of the English Act, and he thought it would be well in this case to follow the precedent furnished in that measure.

*__The LORD ADVOCATE__ (Mr. J. B. Balfour) said, that the words adopted had satisfied the Scotch Grand Committee, who knew the requirements of Scotch life. They heard a good deal about the use of parish rooms during the Debates on the English Act, but he was sorry to say that they had no parish rooms in Scotland. He feared there might be a risk of its being held that buildings erected for a specified purpose must not be used for any other purpose, and he thought it was for the Parish Council rather than for Parliament to say for what purposes buildings should be acquired.

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY protested against the construction put on the Amendment by the Lord Advocate. As a much humbler member of the Scottish Bar he would venture to say he thought the suggested construction perfectly fantastic. There was a conspicuous experience to the contrary in the daily life of Scotland, for political meetings were upon many occasions held in schoolrooms. The words selected by the Government were conspicuous for their vagueness. Who was to say what "other purposes" were? It was for Parliament to lay down for what purposes public money was to be spent, and that having been effectively done in the English Act surely the Government was not going now to throw darkness upon the scene by putting in these words.

Major DARWIN said, that, in moving a similar Amendment in Committee, he had asked for definite instances to be cited on the other side, and had challenged the hon. Member to state any single purpose referred to in the clause which would not be covered by those words. No one ever supposed that a parish would be justified in expending money on illegitimate objects which would not be covered by the language used. The reason given by the Lord Advocate was one of the most curious he had ever heard. If there were any real objection to this Amendment he hoped that some hon. Member would cite a definite instance in support of the contention that any real harm would come from the introduction of these words.

Mr. CALDWELL, in opposing the Amendment, said the clause would not confer upon the land committee of the Parish Councils powers to erect buildings for the purposes of speculation, or to expend money for any purposes not for the benefit of the people.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 114; Noes 49.—(Division List, No. 221.)

Sir C. PEARSON moved the omission of Sub-section (c) of Clause 24—namely,

"To provide or acquire land for the erection of workmen's dwellings."

He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland would make in this case an exception from the rule he had laid down, that he would adhere to the Bill as it left the Committee. This power was not in the Bill as proposed by the Government. This sub-section was not part of the original Bill, but was introduced after a discussion originated by the Member for Elginshire. The Secretary for Scotland treated the Amendment of the hon. Member as one of the most important Amendments that had been tabled against the Bill, and he said that if it were added to the Bill the Bill would be lost. The hon. Member for Elgin was a little hard on the right hon. Gentleman, for in a subsequent speech he accused the right hon. Gentleman of having treated the subject with a most unjustifiable levity. On the Division the Amendment was opposed by all the Members of the Government present, but, nevertheless, it was carried. On these grounds he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to stand by his original proposition and reject the Amendment. The sub-section was a strange incongruity, and was utterly out of place in this Bill. It was quite out of place to confer powers of this kind when no machinery for carrying them out was provided in the clause. At present this sub-section stood a mere abortion, incapable of being carried out. The Parish Council was to provide or acquire land for the erection of working men's dwellings. He did not mean to detract from the importance of improving the housing of the working classes, whether in town or country; and he did not think that anyone would say that the matter had not been sufficiently attended to by the last Conservative Government. His objection to the proposal was that though the Parish Council had power to provide or acquire land for workmen's dwellings, they were given no power to erect workmen's dwellings; and all the Parish Council could do, having acquired the land, was to treat indirectly with some speculative builder for the erection of the dwellings. He, therefore, hoped the Government would strike this inoperative provision out of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 15, line 3, to leave out paragraph (c), of Sub-section (1), of Clause 24. — (*Sir C. Pearson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, it was quite true that the provision which the right hon. Gentleman wanted to omit was not in the Bill originally, and that it was inserted in Committee against his wishes. But what was the use of sending this Bill to the Grand Committee, largely composed of Scottish Members, if they intended to leave the Bill in exactly the same state as it was when it went before the Committee? That argument might be exactly applied to Committees of the House. The indubitable intention was that the Bill should be considered and amended by those best acquainted with the circumstances. It was perfectly ridiculous that in a measure of this kind a Minister should have his own way in regard to all the clauses. He might say that he was decidedly in favour of giving Local Bodies the power, under due restriction, of obtaining land when it could not be obtained by free contract. But he asked hon. Members not to put the Amendment in this Bill, not because he objected to the proposal in principle, but because the clause contained a good deal which was very important, and if it was put in the Bill the clause would be overweighted. His advice was not taken on the matter; but he was bound to say that it was the one single exception in which attention was not paid to the expostulations of the gentleman, coming from his mouth. He had advised a number of Amendments to be withdrawn, and this was the first of them in which his advice had been disregarded. But his advice was carried out in regard to many others which followed. The sub-section having been introduced into the Bill in Committee, he advised that the House should now accept it. He did not see why an exception to the rule he had laid down should be made in this particular case, and why the Government should say—"This and this alone is the Amendment which in principle we are going to leave out of the Bill." The power that was given by the Amendment was not very large, because it was confined within the limits of the 6d. rate; but if the principle was asserted, only in very extreme cases it would be perfectly possible, even within this limit for the Parish Council, to purchase a portion of land, and afterwards sell it for the purpose of erecting workmen's dwellings. At any rate, it would be inducement to those people, who for reasons every one must deplore, refused to sell land for this purpose, to act somewhat more reasonably than they would do otherwise.

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY said, it was curious to see how the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland alternately remembered and forgot the English Bill, according as it suited the view of the Government at the moment. He opposed this in Grand Committee upstairs, where the proportions of the Government were much more in their favour than in the House, and allowed himself to be beaten, and now he refused to use his power in the House which he would have if he exercised his authority in a proper way in order to remedy his defeat. It reminded him of another historical person, who "whispering she would ne'er consent, consented." But he entirely repudiated the right hon. Gentleman's own version of his own speech upstairs. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman warned the Committee that the insertion of this sub-section would mean the wrecking of the Bill; but he did not in any way couple that with a warning that other innovations might be made. The whole brunt of his argument was that the clause would be perfectly unworkable, and that they would need proper and complete machinery to deal with that land if it were so acquired. Even a few moments ago the right hon. Gentleman spoke of restrictions, but there were none in the Bill. Then, showing probably his desire to conciliate the Member for Elgin and Nairn on the limit of the 6d. rate, the right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the Parish Council would be able to take land under this section, and, buildings having been erected, could sell it again and buy more with the 6d. rate. Now, that was what he pointed out at the time in Committee, that they are giving power to any small Parish Council to sell the whole of the land in that parish. If there were a proper proposal, and instances to show it was necessary for providing land for workmen's houses where they might reasonably want it, this House would willingly consider it, but not on such vague assertions of people being unwilling to part with their land. There were circumstances in which such power was abused. The right hon. Gentleman no doubt represented Glasgow, but perhaps he had been near enough to Edinburgh to hear of Tynecastle. Did the right hon. Gentleman know why workmen's dwellings were erected there? If not, he had better study that very interesting chapter of history. All kinds of abuse would be possible if there were no restrictions on a sub-section like that now under consideration. The Secretary for Scotland had given no good ground for suddenly executing this *volte face* against his own declarations in Committee, and allowing the sub-section to remain in the Bill.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.) said, that the Government were observing the rule they had laid down of adhering to the Bill substantially as it left the Committee, and when the Secretary for Scotland enunciated that course of action he was cheered by the Leader of the Opposition. On a former Amendment, when it was sought by a follower of the Government to introduce something that was in the English Act, the Government refused the Amendment, and gentlemen opposite voted against making the Bill like the English Act. What was sauce for the goose was sauce for that much more nobler animal—the gander. He thought they had a right to expect that the House would adhere to the proposal deliberately carried against the Government in the Committee upstairs.

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said, that hon. Members opposite had studiously avoided making any reflection on the character of the sub-section. Since the Amendment was passed in Committee, although weeks had elapsed, he thought they could not point to a single Scottish newspaper—although the Liberal Party in this House had very strong and extreme opponents in Scotland—which had had a word to say against this Amendment. Although the Government might be twitted about not putting the sub-section in the Bill originally, yet the fact that the whole press of Scotland had been united since then, either in dumb silence or strong approval, was surely a sufficient justification for the Secretary for Scotland now adhering to the sub-section. It was said, too, that there was not a full meeting of the Committee on the occasion the Amendment was carried. But at all events every Liberal Member present, without one single exception, voted for the Amendment, and that was something to say. If there had been an absolutely full meeting of the Committee the probability was that the majority in favour of the Amendment would have been greater. This provision was necessary, because it was notorious that land could not be got for workmen's dwellings on any terms in the rural districts of Scotland, and because it was the fixed policy of many landlords to depopulate the rural districts. The hon. and learned Member had not said a word against the principle of the sub-section, for he knew as well as *The Scotsman* newspaper did that nothing could possibly be said in refutation of this enormous public question, which would interest every parish in three-fourths of the area of Scotland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR thought it rather hard on the Government that the hon. Gentleman should have been allowed to say that not a single Liberal Member had the courage to vote against the Amendment in the Committee. There were seven Members of the Government on the Committee, all of whom voted against the Amendment, and he should have thought that those gentlemen had some right to be described as Liberal Members. But though he did not wish to quote against the Government their own speeches in Committee, he must say a word against the two kinds of arguments to which they had been listening on this subject. The Government thought it was a sufficient argument to urge against the Amendment that a definite decision was come to upstairs, and when it suited their purpose they supplemented that by saying that a similar course was taken on the English Bill. But then a Member for one of the Divisions of Edinburgh got up and complained of the course taken by the Government, and called attention to the fact that early in the evening an Amendment, the object of which was to bring the Bill in a certain respect into conformity with the English Bill, had been rejected. The principle which ought to regulate the House in the consideration of this Bill as compared with the English Bill was very simple. It was that wherever the circumstances of Scotland were parallel to the circumstances of England, the English Bill should form a very strong precedent. If the circumstances of Scotland and England were different, there was no precedent for their conduct, and they might, with an easy conscience, depart from the precedents set by themselves, even though they were only six months old. He might remind the hon. Member (Mr. Paul) that distance from a parish, which should give a qualification to a man in the peculiar circumstances of Scotland with regard to the size of parishes, was a relevant circumstance which might operate.

Mr. PAUL: The limit was omitted from the Amendment.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, that in that case the arguments of the hon. Gentleman fell to the ground, because he thought the hon. Gentleman was basing his argument on the ground that they were departing from the English Bill. Apparently he wished to depart from it himself. Was there anything in the nature of the case which made it more necessary to enable Scottish Parish Councils to enter into building speculations with regard to labourers' cottages than the parallel case of England? The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had been good enough to suggest that the Scotch owners of land were occupied in depopulating the rural districts by refusing to repair cottages. That would be an admirable argument if the Amendment sought to give the Parish Councils power to repair. If the landlords were occupied in the benevolent undertaking of turning out the people on whom they depended for the cultivation of their land, the House ought to begin by giving the Parish Councils power to repair the cottages.

Mr. CALDWELL said, they could not repair other people's property.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, they could not unless they had the power. He thought, however, they might put aside as an invention the argument of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Seymour Keay). The Government had told them that they might make this power what they liked, but no serious abuse could follow, because there was this precious 6d. limit. But he would point out that the result of their 6d. limit, in conjunction with these illimitable powers, was that the whole money might have been spent upon objects upon which no money should have been spent at all. If they put it in the power of a Parish Council elected in a particular year under accidental circumstances of local pressure to spend not merely the 6d. rate for the year for which it held office, but to mortgage the rates in the future, it was perfectly clear that they would not increase the powers of Parish Councils, but gravely curtail and limit them, and that, in his judgment, was one of the most powerful arguments which ought to induce the House to refuse to give such a liberty to individual Parish Councils. They were told that one of the vital necessities of Scotland was that there should be a great extension of building accommodation for the labouring classes. If those powers were really required—a point upon which he had received no fact to confirm the statements of the hon. Gentleman — they ought to begin by conferring them on the great Burgh Councils. To begin with the landward parishes was too ludicrous an inversion of the equities and expediency of the case to commend itself to any body of reasonable men. It was absurd to give these powers first to small districts which, compared with large centres of population like Manchester, Glasgow, and Edinburgh, with large working-class populations, one could not help describing as twopenny - halfpenny parishes. And when they introduced powers of this kind, which could not be carried out because no machinery was provided, they did not give a substantial increase of power to those bodies which they created, and they made the Bill ridiculous. He earnestly hoped the Government would revert to their better sentiments which they defended in the Committee, and would follow the parallel set by this House and their own colleagues when they were dealing with the Bill relating to England and Wales.

MR. D. CRAWFORD said, he hoped it would be noted in Scotland that the Leader of the Opposition had contended that a very great boon was to be conferred upon "twopenny parishes" in Scotland that were quite undeserving of such consideration.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he thought that when a comparison was made in certain cases between the landward parishes and the great Municipalities like Glasgow and Edinburgh in point of population, wealth, and experience, the colloquial expression "twopenny-halfpenny parishes" was not inappropriate.

*MR. D. CRAWFORD said, he was glad the right hon. Gentleman with his usual courage adhered to the expression. He (Mr. Crawford) did not agree that the large towns were more entitled than the rural districts to good houses for the working classes. The right hon. Gentleman ought to know, and, he thought must know, that in practice and by the letter of the law as it stood at present, the urban population had facilities under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts which were wholly inoperative in rural districts. As to the right hon. Gentleman's observations on the maxim of the Secretary of Scotland as to dealing with the English Local Government Act, the right hon. Gentleman accepted an Amendment by the Member for North Ayrshire, although it was contrary to the decision of the Committee, upon the ground that it was a provision of the English Act. It could not be maintained that the particular power proposed to be given to the Parish Councils was either different in kind or less necessary than those other powers which the clause conferred upon them. Objection had not been raised to those other powers conferred upon County Councils, such, for example, as their power to provide recreation grounds and the like. He maintained that no one could deny that a good house was of far more importance to a working man than providing him with amusements. The right hon. Gentleman said that those powers would be used in a reckless way by these "twopenny parishes." He did not agree with him, and pointed out that before a parish could use them it would be necessary to submit the proposal to the County Council. He was glad the Secretary for Scotland had taken the magnanimous line of upholding the decision of the Committee, which was arrived at contrary to his own advice. He was quite certain it was the right decision, and that it would be approved by the country.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 108 ; Noes 46.—(Division List, No. 222.)

*CAPTAIN HOPE moved, in page 15, line 29, leave out from "Act," to end of sub-section. He said he offered no apology for bringing this matter before the House. The decision arrived at by the Committee upstairs could not be expected to prevent another discussion arising in that House. The words he wished to see left out of the sub-section were words which brought into the duties of the Parish Councils certain duties which had been conferred upon the County Councils of Scotland by the Local Government Act of 1889. The provisions of this sub-section gave the Parish Councils powers, such as the power of appeal against the action of the District Council, which under the Local Government Act of 1889 was invested in a certain number of householders or ratepayers. This he did not object to, but when it came to investing Parish Councils with the same powers as were conferred upon a County Council, it was time to give careful consideration to what they were doing. The right hon. Gentleman opposite told them that evening that it was the desire of the Government to frame a consecutive system of government, starting with the County Council——

It being Midnight, Further Proceeding stood adjourned.

Further Proceeding to be resumed To-morrow.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [*Lords.*].—(No. 342.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said, he should like to know whether there was any Report from the Committee on Statute Law Revision with regard to this Bill?

MR. TOMLINSON said, the Bill had been before the Committee, but they had not reported.

Sir J. RIGBY said, there was no special Report on this Bill.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he wanted to introduce some words including the intoxication of children——

Mr. TOMLINSON: This is a consolidation Bill, and I shall oppose any alteration.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he had no objection to the opposition of the hon. Gentleman——

Mr. TOMLINSON: I object.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 340.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [2nd August].

Mr. ASQUITH said, this Bill had passed the Lords, and he hoped the objection might be withdrawn.

Further Objection being taken, Debate further adjourned till To-morrow.

QUARRIES BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 341.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

***Mr. HOZIER** said, he would like to know whether these quarries would come under the inspection of the late Postmaster of Cleator Moor?

Mr. ASQUITH said, the quarries would come under the inspection of the Inspectors of Metalliferous Mines, because, although they were above ground, they were really mines.

Mr. HOZIER said, the Home Secretary had not answered his question.

Mr. ASQUITH said, the quarries would be inspected by the persons who had been appointed Inspectors of Metalliferous Mines.

***Mr. TOMLINSON** said, he objected to an important Bill of this kind being taken without notice. It was provided that there were to be special Rules framed for giving effect to the measure, and he did not think the Bill was one that ought to be passed without the House having been given an opportunity of properly considering whether these Rules ought not to be inserted in the Bill.

Mr. ASQUITH said, he thought he could give the hon. Gentleman the assurances that he wanted.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked whether the Bill could be taken at an hour when the House would have time to discuss it?

Mr. ASQUITH said, yes, certainly; but that rested with the hon. Gentleman himself.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, there were a good many chalk pits or quarries in his county which would be brought under the operation of this Act, and it might be necessary to see how they would be affected.

Mr. ASQUITH said, if the right hon. Baronet would put down any Amendment or make any suggestion he would bear it in mind.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

HOUSE OF COMMONS (VACATING OF SEATS).

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix, brought up, and read [Inquiry not completed].

PRIZE COURTS BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 311.)

As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

IRISH EDUCATION BILL.—(No. 247.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.—(No. 336.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

LAND TENURE (IRELAND) BILL. (No. 7.)

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

House adjourned at a quarter after Twelve o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 10th August 1894.

NEW WRIT ISSUED.

For the County of Sussex (South Western or Chichester Division), *v.* The Right Hon. Walter Charles Gordon Lennox, commonly called Lord Walter Lennox, Manor of Northstead.—(*Mr. Akers-Douglas.*)

QUESTIONS.

COVENTRY CHARITIES.

MR. BALLANTINE (Coventry): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner, in the event of the Local Government Board conferring upon the Council of the City of Coventry the powers of a Parish Council, what number of additional members of the Governing Body of the general charities of Coventry would the Charity Commissioners empower the Council to appoint in accordance with Sub-section 3, of Section 14, of The Local Government Act, 1894; and whether, if the number of elected Trustees which the Charity Commissioners would allow under the Act would be greater than under the proposed Scheme, measures will be taken by the Charity Commissioners to prevent the representative bodies of Coventry named in the Scheme losing the rights they would have under the Act?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON, Suffolk, Eye): The question anticipates both the action of the Local Government Board under Section 33 of The Local Government Act, 1894, and the decision of important questions of construction which arise on other sections of the Act. In these circumstances, the Commissioners are not in a position to say how their discretion would be exercised; but any representation made by the Council of the city, in the result of the publication of the Scheme, will be carefully considered before it is established.

In answer to a further question by Mr. BALLANTINE,

MR. F. S. STEVENSON said: It is undoubtedly the wish of the Commissioners that there should, if practicable, be a majority of representative Trustees. That wish, however, cannot be carried out in the present instances without the consent of the existing Trustees. With regard to the action which the Commissioners may take in the future, that depends upon a series of hypothetical contingencies and upon the legal interpretation of Clause 33 of the Act.

THE "HALL BY THE SEA," MARGATE.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will inquire into the circumstances under which extensions of time for the nights of the 4th, 6th, and 8th of August were granted to Mr. George Sanger, of the "Hall by the Sea" public-house at Margate, by the Borough Bench; whether he is aware that, in the first instance, the Bench granted the extension for the 4th and 6th of August, and refused it for the 8th of August, but that subsequently, on the 1st of August, they granted the extension for the 8th of August, on the ground that some time ago an agreement or understanding was come to between the Justices and Mr. Sanger that all applications made by him for extensions of time should be granted; whether such an agreement or understanding, if it exists, is legal; whether he is aware that the numerous grants of extension of time to Mr. Sanger have given great dissatisfaction in Margate to the inhabitants and to the other licensed victuallers; and whether he can take any steps in the matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): The Report which I have received from the Justices is as follows:—

> "For some years past it has been the custom to grant extension of time during the season to the "Hall by the Sea" (Mr. Sanger) and to the Royal Assembly Rooms, the two premises having a similar class of entertainment, on Saturday till 11. 45 p.m. and on Monday till 12 p.m, the occasion being an extra concert and ball; and also on Wednesday till 12 p.m., the occasion being a juvenile ball. At the Petty Sessions on July 25 last the usual application was made by Mr. Sanger, of the "Hall by the Sea" (through his solicitor), for the usual extensions

of time—namely, on July 28 (Saturday), July 30 (Monday), and August 1 (Wednesday). The Justices granted the application for July 28 and July 30, but refused the application for August 1. At the Petty Sessions of August 1 the application for extension of time for August 1 was renewed and granted by a Bench of Justices differently constituted to the Bench on July 25. On each occasion there were eight Justices present, and on the first occasion there were four of the Justices in favour and four against the application. No agreement has ever been come to by the Justices and Mr. Sanger that all applications made by him for extensions of time should be granted; but Margate, being a season town, the applications have not been refused, as there have been no complaints against these two places of entertainment."

No doubt any such understanding, if it existed, would be illegal. The Licensing Justices state that they are not aware that these extensions have given great dissatisfaction in Margate. I have no jurisdiction to interfere with the discretion of Justices in the exercise of their licensing powers.

GAME PROSECUTIONS IN SCOTLAND.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a sentence of six months' imprisonment recently passed by Sheriff Substitute Taylor, Forfar, upon George Milne, labourer, for killing a hare on a public road; whether he is aware that, in consequence of Milne's imprisonment, his wife and seven children will probably become chargeable to the Parochial Board; whether he can see his way to reduce this sentence; and whether he will take steps to alter the law so that sentences for such offences may be lighter?

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.): George Milne was sentenced, as stated in the question, to six months' imprisonment for a third offence under The Night Poaching Act. In 1887 he was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, and in 1889 to three months' imprisonment for this offence. He has been convicted of day poaching five times, and of contravention of The Poaching Prevention Act twice. He has also been convicted of breaches of the peace and assaults, as well as of various thefts, having on two occasions eceived six months' and nine months' prisonment. I am further informed t he never works, and that his house aintained by his wife, who, while her husband is in prison, has on various occasions received allowances from the Parochial Board. Two of his children now contribute to the expenses of the household from wages earned by them in a factory. From what I have stated it will be seen that the case is not a favourable one.

*Mr. WEIR asked if the sentence was not one of exceptional severity, and if the right hon. Gentleman would promote a change in the law to prevent such sentences being passed in future?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is a matter of opinion.

THE HIGHLAND RAILWAY.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Highland Railway Company have yet made arrangements to so marshal their trains that the automatic brake is in action throughout that part of the train which conveys passengers; and, if not, whether immediate steps will be taken to compel this Company to comply with the requirements of the Board of Trade?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.): No, Sir; although the Board of Trade have granted concessions to this Company as regards the number of mixed trains permitted, no effort has been made by the Company to comply with the Order of the Board of Trade to so marshal their trains as to give the best security for their passengers. The Board have hoped, and still hope, that an important and wealthy Corporation like the Highland Railway Company will, especially in a matter involving the safety of travellers, no longer delay to comply with the law without obliging the Department to have recourse to legal proceedings.

THE DEER FOREST COMMISSION.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is now in a position to state when the Deer Forest Commission will terminate its inquiry; and when the Report of the Commission will be issued?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Commissioners that they expect to complete their work in connection with the inspection of lands by the middle of next month, and that they will use every effort to submit their Report as soon thereafter as possible.

MILITARY BANDS AT POLITICAL GATHERINGS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the report in *The Surrey Advertiser* of the 4th of August, relative to the proceedings of the Cranleigh Habitation of the Primrose League, at which the band of the West Surrey Regiment is stated to have attended and played; whether he is aware that the report shows that the gathering was a purely Party one; that Sir Richard Webster, M.P., spoke on political subjects, and apologised for the absence of another Conservative Member; whether the War Office has several times declared that military bands must not attend Party meetings; and who is responsible for inviting the band to be present on this occasion, and who sanctioned its attendance on behalf of the regiment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN, Stirling, &c.): This question only appeared on the Paper this morning; and as some local inquiry is needed, I must ask my hon. Friend to postpone it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will put it again on Monday. I may say I gave notice of it on Wednesday.

BUILDING BYE-LAWS IN LONDON.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that, during the absence on holiday of the Building Act Committee of the London County Council, no arrangements are made to deal with complaints relating to the use of improper material, or of defective work carried out by builders and passed by careless district surveyors in the County of London; whether, under these circumstances, he can take any steps to ensure the carrying out of the Building Acts and give effect to the bye-laws approved by the Home Secretary on the 19th of October, 1891; whether he is aware that, owing to this freedom from control, a vast amount of improper work is executed by dishonest builders; that, in consequence, the occupiers of newly-built houses suffer not only in pocket, but in health; the Local Sanitary Authorities have an excessive amount of work imposed upon them, and the ratepayers are taxed for the maintenance of a larger staff by the Local Sanitary Authorities than would be required if houses were properly constructed in the first instance; and that Local Sanitary Authorities have no power to act until newly-built houses are occupied and discovered to be imperfect and insanitary; and whether he will take steps to remedy this state of matters?

MR. ASQUITH: I have already stated, in answer to previous questions, that the enforcement of the Building Acts is outside my jurisdiction, and I can only refer my hon. Friend to the County Council.

THE COAL STRIKE IN SCOTLAND.

MR. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is in a position to give the House any further information about the coal strike in Scotland; whether it is the case that proposals have been made that the masters should meet the representatives of the men with a view to terminating the strike and establishing a Board of Conciliation for the settlement of future differences and the fixing of wages for a reasonable term in advance; whether the associated masters, the unassociated masters, and the men respectively are willing to meet for that object; and if the reluctance of any of these parties is an obstacle to such a settlement, whether there is any prospect of its being removed; and whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any steps, or see their way to take any steps, to bring about a settlement of the present dispute and the establishment of a Board of Conciliation?

MR. BRYCE: Several proposals have been made for a meeting between the coalmasters and representatives of the men for the purpose of arranging a settlement of the present unfortunate dispute, but I am not aware whether any plan for the establishment of a Board of Conciliation for the settlement of future differences has recently been formulated. It has been publicly stated, and not contradicted, that the non-associated masters and the men respectively are willing to meet for the purpose of arranging terms, and I have strong hopes that the associated masters will also be found willing to join in an amicable conference. Her Majesty's Government, as I have informed the House on former occasions, have been carefully watching the dispute since its commencement, and have been perfectly willing, in case a fitting opportunity should arise, to use their good offices for the purpose of bringing about a conference between the parties. I have been for some time past in communication with the Lord Provost of Glasgow upon the subject, and trust that the judicious action which he has taken, and which appears to be regarded with satisfaction by all parties, may be attended with beneficial results. I have also been in communication with other parties concerned; but these communications have been of a confidential nature, and it would not be proper for me to make any statement here regarding them. With reference to the last paragraph of the question, I need only add that nothing which Her Majesty's Government could properly do to aid in bringing about an adjustment of the dispute will be wanting on their part.

THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE.

Sir A. HAYTER (Walsall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office has taken any steps to carry out the recommendations of the Ridley Commission made in their Report of 1890 to amalgamate the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Services, the members of which should be interchangeable, and the entrance examination the same?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): Since April, 1891, the entrance examination has been the same for both Services. It is intended that a Committee composed of members of the Treasury and Foreign Office should report on questions arising out of the recommendations of the Royal Commission; but the matter requires careful consideration, as the amalgamation of the two Services on the terms recommended by the Commission will necessitate either some material changes or a considerable increase of expenditure.

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any decision has been arrived at as to the amount of the military contribution to be paid annually by the Straits Settlements; and if he will state the amount?

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): At the same time, I will ask the hon. Gentleman a similar question standing in my name.

The UNDER SECRETARY for the COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Not yet; but I hope, before the end of the Session, to be able to state it.

SIAM.

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the long-promised Papers relating to affairs in Siam will be presented; and whether he will undertake that the Vote for the Foreign Office will not be submitted to the House until it has had an opportunity of perusing the correspondence relating to recent occurrences in Siam?

Sir E. GREY: The Papers will be issued on Wednesday.

PRIVATE POSTCARDS.

Mr. ERNEST SPENCER (Bromwich): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether the Post Office is prepared at once to accept private cards with a halfpenny stamp affixed providing such cards do not exceed the size or weight of departmental or ordinary post cards, or if the public, before making use of the new arrangement, must await the issue of new Regulations on the subject; and, in the latter case, will the Department, as it is a matter of considerable interest to the commercial community, fix an early date for the issue of such Regulations and give the date of same; and in the event of new Regulations being necessary, will the Department consider the advisability of allowing a variation of size and shape in the direction now followed in the case of the envelopes sold by the Department bearing a penny embossed stamp?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): As stated in the House yesterday, new Regulations will be necessary before the public can make use of private cards as post cards. The required Warrant is being prepared, and a date will be fixed on which the change is to take effect. The Warrant will specify the dimensions to be allowed. No time will be lost in preparing the documents.

SANITATION IN PARLIAMENT HOUSES.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether any change has been made in the method of carrying off the sewer air discharged into the Clock Tower shaft since Sir Henry Roscoe made a statement before the Select Committee on Ventilation in 1891; and whether he can account for the impurity of the atmosphere in the Committee Rooms?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. H. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): As I indicated in my answer to the hon. Member on Tuesday last, no change has been made in the drainage arrangements of the House since the inquiry of 1891. I am not aware that there is any impurity of the atmosphere in the Committee Rooms, except what may occasionally be caused by overcrowding.

*MR. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire whether the statements in his answer of Tuesday were not generally inaccurate?

MR. H. GLADSTONE: I can assure the hon. Gentleman that what I stated then was strictly accurate.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he has yet had an opportunity of ascertaining if the air (sewer gas) from the main drain of the Houses of Parliament is aspirated through the whole length of the system from the Victoria Tower to the Clock Tower?

MR. H. GLADSTONE: I stated on Tuesday last that the main drain is aspirated in the other direction, from the Clock Tower to the Victoria Tower. It is aspirated through the whole length of the system.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): Are the drains properly trapped?

MR. WEIR: Yes; they are.

MR. H. GLADSTONE: If the hon. Member wishes to satisfy himself on the subject I will give him every facility.

PROMOTION IN THE FOOT GUARDS.

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the congestion of promotion now existing in the Foot Guards as compared with Line regiments; and whether he will consider the possibility of remedying the difficulty by making the proportion of captains to lieutenants the same in the Guards as in the Line?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Promotion in the Guards is slower than in the Infantry of the Line, and this is mainly due to the fact that there is a larger proportion of subalterns to senior officers in the Guards than in the Infantry. This arrangement is valued by the Guards, and the effect on promotion when considered in connection with the advantages of Guards service generally is not at present sufficiently important to demand remedial measures.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING AT ST. STEPHEN'S.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will consider the advisability of providing the Houses of Parliament with an electric lighting installation instead of taking the current from an outside source, at a cost of three times more than if it were generated on the premises; and whether he is aware that there is ample space for such an installation, and that the outlay for dynamos and additional power would be quickly recouped by the saving which would be effected?

MR. H. GLADSTONE: This matter of providing the Houses of Parliament with electric installation has already received careful consideration. The evidence before me shows that no complete installation of electric-lighting machinery and plant can be established within the building without occasional serious interference with its proper ventilation, and we have already some experience with a partial installation which confirms this view. The generation of electricity within the building has been abandoned, both for this reason and because the boilers now existing are no longer strong enough to bear the strain of working both the ventilation and lighting systems. The cost of constructing a complete electrical station outside the building in connection with the warming and ventilating arrangements has been considered, and it would probably reach £30,000 or £40,000; while the expense of wages and maintenance would also be very heavy. The subject will receive further attention, but, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, it must be deferred for the present. Taking into account the capital outlay, I am not at all prepared to admit that the saving would be anything like that suggested.

CORDITE FOR ARMY MUSKETRY PRACTICE.

Mr. HANBURY (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state in how many cases detachments of Regulars going through their musketry course have been allowed only black powder instead of cordite; whether this is the case with the detachments shooting at Barry Links Camp; and whether Regulars shooting with black powder in competition with men of regiments supplied with cordite have to fulfil the same conditions in other respects, or in what way are the conditions made equal for both?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Only the troops in the Southern District at Aldershot have fired cordite ammunition; the remainder, including the detachments shooting at Barry Links, have used black powder. When troops belonging to different regiments compete at rifle meetings the same ammunition is issued to all competitors.

WATER SUPPLY AT ST. STEPHEN'S.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will state whether the water closets off the Committee Room corridors are supplied directly from the same cistern from which water is drawn for domestic purposes, or whether disconnecting cisterns are in use for these water closets?

Mr. H. GLADSTONE: One set of the water closets off the Committee Room corridor is supplied from a cistern from which water is drawn for domestic purposes; but in the other case the supplies are separate. Instructions have been given for making the supplies entirely separate. I may mention that the Select Committee on the Accommodation of the House advise, in their Report, that a careful examination should be made into the condition of the water closets in the buildings, and this shall be done.

THE LIGHT DUES.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire into the condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund, and the mode of levying the Light Dues; whether he will state the Order of Reference to such Committee, and the names of the Members; and whether any proposal to relieve the shipping interest of Light Dues at the cost of the Exchequer will be excluded from the inquiry of the Committee?

Mr. BRYCE: Yes, Sir; I propose to appoint such a Committee. If my right hon. Friend will repeat his question in a few days, I trust to be able to state to the House the Order of Reference and the names of the gentlemen who have been asked to serve. The answer to the third paragraph is in the negative.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH: Does that mean that the question will be excluded?

Mr. BRYCE: No, Sir.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH: Will there be any representative of the Treasury on the Committee?

Mr. BRYCE: Yes.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Will the Order of Reference include the relief of the shipping interest, seeing that the Board of Trade now takes a large portion of the Mercantile Marine Fund?

Mr. BRYCE: I do not follow that question.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: At present the Board of Trade takes a very large sum out of the Light Dues levied on shipping. Will the right hon. Gentleman consider, in connection with the terms of Reference, if the Mercantile Marine Fund cannot be relieved of that involuntary contribution to the Board of Trade?

Mr. BRYCE: That question has been carefully considered, and when the terms of Reference are made known it will be seen that they are wide enough.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Will the incidence of the Light Dues be left as an open general question?

MR. BRYCE: To make any further statement would be to state the terms of Reference, and that I cannot do now. The terms are very wide, as the Order of Reference will show.

COMMANDEERING IN THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Englishmen in the Transvaal, who were recently commandeered and imprisoned, were turned adrift by the Boer Authorities on the open veldt 200 miles from their homes?

MR. S. BUXTON: The assumption contained in the question is apparently based on a private letter which I have seen. I have no other information on the subject, and I decline to assume with the hon. Member that the South African Republic in regard to this matter have acted in the manner implied.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that the information embodied in his question had appeared in the form of public letters in the correspondence in three of the London morning papers?

MR. S. BUXTON: I have not seen anything in the Press about it. I have only seen a private letter.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Will the hon. Gentleman inquire of Her Majesty's Representative in the Transvaal whether the report is true or not?

MR. S. BUXTON said, he must decline to assume that the South African Republic were acting in contravention of their pledges on this question.

CROFTERS AND THE DOG LICENCE.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that it has been the practice to exempt crofters (small farmers) from the payment of a dog licence in every case where a dog is kept for the purpose of tending sheep or cattle upon a croft or holding, he will take steps to obviate the recurrence of the vexatious prosecutions which have taken place in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland during this year against crofters keeping a dog for this purpose?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) I am not aware of the recurrence of any vexatious prosecutions. I have no doubt that if any information of such proceedings is given to the Inland Revenue, proper care will be taken to inquire whether there is any oppressive proceeding?

*MR. WEIR: I have brought numerous cases during the last few months under the notice of the Inland Revenue, and have received no satisfaction. Will the right hon. Gentleman interpret the law relating to Dog Licences as liberally as the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer?

SIR W. HARCOURT: If the hon. Member is not satisfied with the answer, I will make further inquiry. So far as I can remember, only one case has been put to my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury, and it was answered the other day——

MR. WEIR: Unsatisfactorily.

LAW FACULTY FOR LONDON UNIVERSITY.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Inns of Court and the Incorporated Law Society are willing to assist in forming a Law Faculty in the proposed University of London, according to recommendations of the Gresham University Commission; what inquiries the Government have made on the subject; and whether the Government can give any Return as to the annual amount of income and expenditure of the Inns of Court during the last five years, and the sums appropriated by these bodies to the purpose of legal education during that period?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I have inquired of the Lord Chancellor about this matter, but my noble Friend has no knowledge of any such intention as that assumed in the question; and as to the Return from the Inns of Court, the Government have no control over the Inns of Court, and therefore have no power to call for a Return.

CROFTERS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the fact that the Government declare their unwillingness to go on with the Crofters Act Amendment Bill, should it be opposed, he will state if any efforts have been made to arrive at an understanding with the Leader of the Opposition in order that this measure may be carried before the close of the Session; if no efforts in the direction indicated have been made, will he consider the desirability of making them forthwith, and, if possible, coming to an arrangement; and whether, seeing that the Government have a majority of from 30 to 40, he will re-consider his decision, and resolve to carry the Bill by the adoption of the Closure, if necessary?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I have already stated I did not propose to proceed with the Bill if it were opposed. The Government cannot carry a Bill by the Closure which they say they will not proceed with if it is opposed.

***Mr. WEIR**: Am I to understand that the Chancellor of the Exchequer objects to use his efforts and his talents on behalf of the Highland crofters in the manner indicated in my question?

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): May I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman is aware that the Prime Minister promised the crofters this measure this Session in his Edinburgh speech?

Sir W. HARCOURT: We should have been glad to have carried the Bill if we could; but, under the circumstances, we are unable to do so.

Dr. MACGREGOR: You have not tried.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I know that my hon. Friend has promised to visit us with all kinds of pains and penalties in case this Bill is not carried; but I am afraid that we shall have to endure them.

Dr. MACGREGOR: Is this Bill more contentious than other Bills—than the Budget, for instance?

Sir W. HARCOURT: I am afraid I can hardly ask the House to devote as much time to this Bill as to the Budget.

INSPECTION OF SLATE QUARRIES.

Mr. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the two Inspectors of Slate Quarries lately appointed by him have practical knowledge only of the mine system of slate quarrying practised in Merionethshire, and have no practical knowledge of the totally different system of open slate quarrying practised in Carnarvonshire; and whether he will appoint one Inspector having practical knowledge of the open quarry system, so as to give the quarrymen of Carnarvonshire the same protection as is now afforded to the Merionethshire quarrymen?

Mr. ASQUITH: The case is not as stated in the first paragraph of the question. Mr. Williams, one of the recently-appointed Inspectors of Metalliferous Mines and Quarries, has worked at the Upper Oakley Slate Quarries, which are open quarries; he has a good knowledge of the open quarries of Carnarvonshire, and he has delivered geological lectures on several occasions to the quarrymen of Llanberis and Nantlle Vale. He is bringing out a treatise on slate quarrying, for the preparation of which he tells me that he has visited and studied the methods of working in open and underground quarries in Wales, Cornwall, and France. One of the strongest representations that reached me in favour of the appointment of Mr. Williams was contained in a letter from Mr. Prichard, the manager of Penrhyn Quarries, in Carnarvonshire (who himself began life as a quarryman). I am satisfied that both the Assistant Inspectors are fully competent to inspect both open and underground quarries, and that there is no sufficient ground for the further addition to the staff as suggested in my hon. Friend's question.

DALMORE SHOOTING RANGE.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Dalmore shooting range, near Invergordon, Ross-shire, formerly rented by the 1st Volunteer Battalion Seaforth Highlanders, is still closed; if so, by whose authority and for what reason was it closed; and whether, if the Dalmore range is not available by the Volunteers of the district, any steps have been taken to provide another range for their use; and, if so, at what stage are the negotiations?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Dalmore rifle range was closed by the proprietor on the 25th of April last. The reason given by him for closing the range was that the use of it interfered with his farm, and that the land was being converted into golf links. A new range has been proposed, and its construction approved, at Alness, in Ross-shire.

LEIGHLINBRIDGE NATIONAL SCHOOL.

DR. KENNY (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (1) whether he is aware that Mrs. Carey, late teacher of the Leighlinbridge, County Carlow, Female National School, was on the 9th of August, 1892, served with a three months' notice of dismissal by the manager of the said school, the Rev. J. Connolly, P.P.; (2) whether the notice alleged any cause for Mrs. Carey's dismissal, and whether Mrs. Carey had been over 20 years a teacher with an excellent record; (3) is he aware that on the 11th of August, 1892, Mrs. Carey's husband himself, teacher of the Leighlinbridge Male National School, appealed to the Rev. Father Connolly to permit Mrs. Carey to complete her term of service so as to entitle her to full pension, and that this request was refused by Father Connolly; that subsequently, on the 29th of August, 1892, Mrs. Carey, by letters, requested Father Connolly to specify the grounds on which he was about to dismiss her, but received no reply to her letter; that before the expiration of the three months' notice, on the 14th of September, 1892, Father Connolly informed Mrs. Carey he would not even permit her to complete the three months, and tendered her instead a cheque in payment of salary for the period; (4) whether he is aware that on Mrs. Carey refusing the cheque she was informed by the rev. gentleman that if she did not accept he would peremptorily dismiss her husband also from his post by a three months' notice; (5) whether he is aware that Mrs. Carey then laid her case before the Bishop of the Diocese, the Most Rev. Dr. Lynch, and that after inquiry by his Lordship, she was on 16th October, 1892, restored to her position; that subsequently Father Connolly made charges against Mrs. Carey before the National Board which were investigated by Head Inspector of National Schools, Mr. Connellan, and Mrs. Carey exonerated from blame; (6) whether he is aware that Mrs. Carey is now an inmate of a lunatic asylum; and (7) whether, if the facts are substantially as stated in question, he will seriously consider the necessity of legislating with as little delay as possible to put an end in Ireland to a managerial system under which these occurrences could take place?

MR. J. MORLEY: (1-2.) The statements in the first two paragraphs of the question are substantially accurate. No cause was assigned for the dismissal of Mrs. Carey. (3-4-5.) The allegations in the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs are in accordance with the statements made in the correspondence which took place in the case. It is not correct, however, to say that Mrs. Carey was exonerated from blame on the Report of the Head Inspector after the investigation of the complaints preferred against her by the manager. Of six charges made against her, the Commissioners practically exonerated her as regards five; but on the sixth charge they decided that it was sufficiently established and caused Mrs. Carey to be admonished. (6) There is no foundation for the statement in the sixth paragraph that Mrs. Carey is an inmate of a lunatic asylum. On the contrary, she is still schoolmistress at the school in question. (7) Regarding the concluding paragraph, the Commissioners inform me that this is an entirely isolated case in its leading particulars, and has had no parallel in the history of the National system for the past 60 years.

MR. A. O'CONNOR: In view of the serious character of the allegations contained in the questions, will the right hon. Gentleman direct a sworn inquiry?

MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot pledge myself to that extent, but the matter shall be carefully considered.

MR. FERGUS CURTIN.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Land Judge, Mr. Justice Monroe, on 9th March, 1892, dismissed Mr. Fergus Curtin from the office of receiver of the Blake Forster estate in the Counties of Clare and Galway, and ruled then that he should furnish a final account at once; and whether Judge Monroe, by his Judgment of 1st May, 1894, confirmed the result of this inquiry, by which it was proved that the receiver was guilty of perjury and fraud in at least nine different cases; if so, what action the Attorney General will take?

MR. J. MORLEY: It is the fact that Mr. Fergus Curtin was dismissed from the receivership and ordered to furnish a final account. The order made by the Judge against Mr. Curtin does not state that any criminal offence was committed. It found him guilty of default and ordered him to account. As to any further steps, the Judge has the question still under consideration, and if he directs a prosecution it will be instituted. In the alternative, if the Land Court places the reliable material before the Attorney General, he will consider whether there is a case for a criminal prosecution.

CARN, COUNTY DERRY, SCHOOL.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to the fact, already brought to his notice, that some 70 children at Carn, County Derry, are being educated in a small insanitary room, condemned by the Inspectors of the National Education Board, whilst a suitable building close by remains unused, owing to a dispute on a point of form between the local manager and the National Board, what is to be done in order to secure a reasonable arrangement?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have communicated with the Board of National Education in reference to this question, and learn that there has been no change in the state of affairs since I replied to my hon. Friend's previous question of the 14th June on the subject. In that reply I stated that there were other schools in the locality, but that being under Protestant management they were objected to by the Roman Catholic clergyman, Mr. Loughrey. The Commissioners inform me that within a mile of the insanitary room referred to in the question there is an excellent national school house, the manager of which, Captain Ogilby, is a Protestant, though the teacher is a Roman Catholic. The Rev. Mr. Loughrey, however, preferred to establish a school of his own, and hence the withdrawal of the Roman Catholic children from Captain Ogilby's school and the establishment of the Carn School. So far back as the autumn of 1892 the Head Inspector of the National Board was instructed to investigate all the circumstances connected with the educational troubles of the locality, and in a Report made by him in September of that year he stated that Captain Ogilby had authorised him to inform the rev. gentleman that he was prepared to appoint him manager unconditionally, but that the rev. Mr. Loughrey declined to accept the appointment.

MR. SEXTON: It is admitted that 70 children are being educated in an insanitary room, and that there is a suitable building close by. Is there no power within the resources of the British Constitution to remove the children to a proper building?

MR. J. MORLEY: I will press the matter on the attention not of the custodian of the Constitution, but on the National Board, and will ascertain whether anything further can be done.

MR. SEXTON: I shall raise the question on a future occasion.

ATTACK ON PRESBYTERIAN CHILDREN AT ARMAGH.

MR. BARTON (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 27th ultimo a party of children belonging to the three Presbyterian congregations of Armagh, when returning to Armagh with their ministers and friends from a country excursion, were attacked by a Nationalist crowd, and driven back in the direction of the railway station, with their mothers and other female relatives, by blows and stones proceeding from the crowd; and that a riotous disturbance ensued in the course of which the children were escorted to their homes by a number of Protestants who formed a cordon on each side of the street so that the children might pass without injury from their assailants; whether the police have identified any persons concerned in the attack; and whether any steps are being taken to enforce the law against such persons?

MR. J. MORLEY: The police have supplied me with very full Reports of what transpired on the occasion to which the question of the hon. and learned Member refers. Proceedings have been directed against a number of persons who were concerned in the occurrence, and until these cases have been disposed of I do not consider it desirable or proper to communicate to the House the substance of the police Reports, notwithstanding that they directly traverse some of the statements in the question. I may add that the occurrence has formed the subject of highly-coloured and exaggerated reports in the Press.

MR. ROSS asked, whether any arrests had been made, and in future would the right hon. Gentleman give directions to the Inspectors that on the occasion of attacks upon women and children the police should endeavour to arrest the parties in the act?

MR. J. MORLEY: I cannot give directions of that kind, or ask the Inspectors to given any. The police of Ireland in cases of the sort have their rules, which were found satisfactory five or ten years ago, and I do not know why they should be less so now.

THE "KOW SHING."

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to give the House accurate information as to the sinking of the *Kow Shing*?

SIR E. GREY: The accounts of what happened are still conflicting. The full depositions of the officers of the *Kow Shing* who were saved are on their way home and will be received about the 24th of September. The Japanese Government have been informed that, in consideration of the circumstances as set forth by them, Her Majesty's Government must hold them responsible for any loss of British life or property.

CHANTABUN.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether before Parliament rises, he will be able to announce the evacuation of Chantabun, in Siam, by French forces; and whether Papers will be presented to this House?

SIR E. GREY: I have no further statement to make with respect to Chantabun.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Has the hon. Baronet any reason to believe that the French intend to evacuate the place?

SIR E. GREY: I have given the reasons, as far as I understand them, why the evacuation has not already taken place.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: Can the Chancellor of the Exchequer give the House any further information as to the course of Public Business?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I hope to be able to make a full statement as to the course of Public Business for the rest of the Session on Monday next. The first Order on Monday will be the Equalization of Rates Bill, which we do not anticipate will occupy any considerable time. The Eight Hours (Mines) Bill will follow on the same night, and as soon as it is disposed of the House will proceed with the discussion of the Indian Budget.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the Navy Estimates be taken next week?

SIR W. HARCOURT: All the Estimates, I hope, will be taken next week.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

"Ordered, that the proceedings on the Local Government (Scotland) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order, Sittings of the House."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 337.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, further considered.

CAPTAIN HOPE (Linlithgow) moved an Amendment with the object of depriving the Parish Council of the right to exercise the powers conferred on a County Council by Sub-section (2) of Section 53 of the Act of 1889. He pointed out that the Parish Council did not administer the Public Health Acts, and said that the district committee was the body to which the administration of the Public Health Acts was intrusted. By the provisions of the Bill the Parish Council would have the right, which surely was properly inherent in the superior and not in the inferior body, of of criticising and calling up the body next above it in the county hierarchy—namely, the district committee. He submitted that that was a violation of the principle which was introduced with very good results by the Local Government Act, which placed the administration of public health matters on the district committee. He did not think the Parish Council had the means of judging whether the Public Health Acts were put in force properly or not. They might hold an opinion upon the subject, but he did not think it was right to put them in the position of being able to force on superior bodies their opinions on such matters. He hoped the Government would see the impropriety of giving this additional power to the Parish Council and would assent to the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 15, line 29, to leave out from the word "Act," to the end of Sub-section (3), of Clause 24.—(*Captain Hope.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and upon a County Council' stand part of the Bill."

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton) said, the Bill proposed that if it should appear to the Parish Council that the Public Health Act had not been properly put in force in every district, they might cause a representation to be made to the Local Government Board. The hon. and gallant Member talked about the superior and inferior bodies. It was not a question of superior or inferior bodies at all. It was a question of the body which knows the wants of the district, and which, in the case of a remedy being refused, could go to the quarter where a remedy could be obtained. It was true that the Parish Council had no administrative functions; but they knew where the shoe pinched, and, therefore, the Bill gave them the right of representation to the Local Government Board. If the Parish Council was not fit to go to the Local Government Board and say that they had been neglected by the other bodies, they were fit for no functions whatsoever. He knew from the relations in which he stood to the Board of Supervision that instead of oeing applied to by private individuals or by a voluntary committee, he should be very glad indeed if he had an authoritative representation coming to him from such a body as the Parish Council.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.) said, there was already an authoritative body—the County Council, to which body the district committee had recourse. He believed most distinctly that it was a retrograde step to place back on the shoulders of the Parish Authority the responsibility which Parliament deliberately took away from them under the Act of 1889. They would scarcely find anyone who was acquainted with the working of the Public Health Act who did not fully recognise the fact that great progress had been made by the transference of the charge of public health from the Parochial to the County Authority.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 15, line 29, after "County Council," insert "by."

Line 36, after "shall," insert "in relation to allotments provided for the parish."

Line 36, after "Council," leave out to end of sub-section, and insert "without any appointment."

Line 38, at end, insert—

"A Parish Council shall have the same power of presenting a Petition with regard to a demand for small holdings in a county as is conferred on any one or more county electors by The Small Holdings Act, 1892, and in lieu of the triennial election by the county electors provided by Section 24 of the said Act, the Parish Council of the parish in which the holdings are situated shall appoint two representatives from their own number to serve as members of the Committee of the County Council."

Page 16, line 14, leave out "the."

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY (Buteshire) said, he wished to move an Amendment to the sub-section of Clause 25 which dealt with the procedure for the compulsory acquisition of land. In this matter the County Council was set in motion by the Parish Council. Upon a representation by the Parish Council the County Council would have to hold an inquiry, after which the County Council might make an order for putting in force the Lands Clauses Acts. Such an order was to be deposited with the Local

Government Board, and upon confirmation by the Board it was to become final. The part of the section he objected to was as follows :—

> "And the confirmation by the Board shall be conclusive evidence that the order has been duly made, and is within the powers conferred by this Act, and that the requirements of this Act have been complied with."

Those words he moved to omit. He contended that if by chance the Local Government Board should go entirely outside the scope of the Bill there should be an appeal to the Law Courts. Mistakes were sometimes made. Whenever a new Act of Parliament was passed questions as to construction were certain to crop up. In the next sub-section it was provided that where the Board was authorised or required to make any inquiries, they might cause such inquiries to be made by any inspector or officer of the Board or by any other person specially nominated by them, and that these persons should be entitled to summon witnesses and examine them on oath. That clearly showed that inquiries would, in many instances, be carried out by persons who had had no special legal training, who could not, therefore, conduct the inquiries with the same acumen as those who had made the study of law their profession, and the result might be some fantastic interpretations of the Act of Parliament. He hoped that the Government would be willing to leave out from the clause the drastic words of the sub-section, so that in the case of the Board acting *ultra vires* there should be a right of appeal to the ordinary Courts of Law. Difficulties would be sure to arise, and he urged on the Government the distinct advisability of having such cases submitted to the Courts of Law as being the only fitting tribunal to adjudicate on them. He entirely deprecated the ousting of the jurisdiction of the ordinary Courts in case of *ultra vires*, for surely the Judges of the Supreme Court were much better able to interpret an Act of Parliament than the tribunal set up by this Act. The persons who were to form that tribunal would receive the magnificent remuneration of three guineas a day ; and he did not think they could get very good interpretations of an Act of Parliament from unpracticed persons at three guineas a day.

Amendment proposed, in page 17, line 21, to leave out from the word "Parliament" to the end of paragraph (c), of Sub-section (7), of Clause 25.—(*Mr. Graham Murray.*)

Question proposed, "That the words down to 'and,' in line 22, stand part of the Bill."

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B Balfour, Clackmannan, &c.), in opposing the Amendment, said, the fact that the words objected to were taken from the English Act was a matter that ought not to be left out of view, for they were the last words of both Houses of Parliament on the subject. He was not surprised that they had been adopted in this Bill, because under the Provisional Order system such Acts as the Allotments and Small Holdings Acts had been absolutely fruitless. To tell the Parish Councils that they were to go through the old expensive formalities would be a mockery, a delusion, and a snare. These formalities having been got rid of, Parliament had to consider how far they would carry protection. Would they leave the new authorities the run of the Courts of Law up to the House of Lords ? Parliament considered that, and said "No." He pointed out that before the provision dealt with by the Amendment came in, the matter must have been three times considered, first by the County Council, then by an appeal to the Board, and the third time by the Board on a memorial being presented to them. Every reasonable precaution had therefore been taken to see that everything had been rightly done. His hon. and learned Friend said that he was not giving an appeal. It was quite true he was not technically proposing to give an appeal, because an appeal meant something in the nature of a review. What his hon. and learned Friend proposed was to allow questions of *ultra vires* to be carried to and litigated in the Law Courts instead of being finally decided by the Board. He submitted it was wise and proper that the confirmation by the Board should be conclusive evidence that the Order had been duly made, because a great many of the evils which existed under the old Provisional Order system would be brought back in another form if they gave any recalcitrant person whose land was proposed to be taken the run of the Law Courts, and one could easily imagine how the mere threat of having to go to the House of Lords would deter a Local Authority such as a Parish Council from entering on any enterprise. There were two highly-skilled lawyers on the Board—the Solicitor General for Scotland and the permanent legal officer—and any questions of excess of power under this section would be of the simplest description. They had got a plain Bill which he who ran might read, and he believed the Board, through its legal members, would be perfectly competent to determine finally any question of *ultra vires* that could possibly be suggested by anyone.

MR. PARKER SMITH (Lanarkshire, Partick) said, that the hon. and learned Gentleman in opposing the Amendment seemed to have forgotten the axiom that "hard cases made bad law." It seemed to him the Lord Advocate had been resting his opposition to this Amendment entirely on the hard case of some litigious person who had the power of the purse, and because he was frightened by the hard case he laid down exceedingly bad law, and went in the face of a deep-lying principle in our Constitution. The whole theory of the British Constitution was that the Courts of Law in the case of every subordinate authority in the Kingdom had a right to inquire into the action of that authority to see whether it had gone beyond the sphere of the powers which Parliament had delegated to it. In this sub-section he believed Parliament had for the first time gone in the face of that principle. It was said that the sub-section was taken from the English Act; but he believed there had been no discussion on the point.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Yes, the whole question was discussed.

MR. PARKER SMITH said, the right hon. Gentleman ought to know, as he was in charge of the English Bill, but he had looked up the *Parliamentary Debates* and could not find any discussion of the point in the clause from which the sub-section was taken. The one point to which he took exception was that the sub-section abolished the doctrine of *ultra vires*. It was an absolute innovation to give the Local Government Board such a power. In this sub-section he believed Parliament had for the first time gone in the face of that principle.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he could assure the hon. Gentleman that the subject was discussed when the Bill was before the House. Indeed, it was the subject of discussion between the two Houses. The principle was to get rid of Parliament and of Courts of Law, and to substitute for what would be a Provisional Order, confirmed by Parliament, a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board. Lord Morley's scheme was submitted to that House, but there were points to which the House would not consent. The intention of Parliament would be frustrated if the action of the Local Government Board were subject to revision by any body or Court. On both sides of the House the object was to make the procedure as simple and inexpensive as possible.

SIR C. PEARSON said, the whole question of procedure was discussed when the English Bill was before the House. The right hon. Gentleman could not point out anything to show that the specific point now raised was then the subject of discussion. He himself did not think it was. The question, though comparatively narrow, was a very important constitutional point, and depended entirely on the word "conclusive." So far as he was aware, in the English Parish Councils Act for the first time Parliament—as he believed by inadvertence—withdrew from the Supreme Courts of the country, and gave over to an executive department the final construction of its own acts of legislation.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I quite admit that it was for the first time, but that is what we intended to do.

SIR C. PEARSON said, he thought Parliament intended to get rid of appeals to Parliament in the form of Provisional Orders, but what about the appeal to Courts of Law? He had always understood that one of the great safeguards against the action of the Executive Government was that Acts of Parliament were only to be construed by the Supreme Judges.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I now remember that an Amendment was proposed on this point, and it was suggested by it that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council should be the tribunal to settle these questions.

SIR C. PEARSON said, he could not help thinking that that was to be a tribunal of appeal on the merits of the question. As an instance of the necessity for an appeal on the construction of Acts of Parliament, he recalled the fact that only a year or two ago the Supreme Court in Scotland decided that certain rules prepared by the Scottish Education Department for cases where a full board was not elected were *ultra vires*, as being inconsistent with one of the clauses of the Education Act. Was the House prepared to withdraw from the Supreme Courts of Law the power of saying whether or not the Executive had gone beyond the intentions of Parliament? He thought it would be most unwise to do so, and urged the Government to reconsider their decision.

MR. CRAWFORD said, the proposal, which was of great theoretical importance, was undoubtedly a very great innovation, and the precedent of the English Act would not have been sufficient to reconcile him to it; but the considerations mentioned by the Lord Advocate ought to convince the House. On the whole, he thought it would be better not to leave the door open to litigation, as the costs which might be incurred would paralyse the provisions of the clause.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 118; Noes 51.—(Division List, No. 223.)]

MR. PARKER SMITH moved to omit the words "and is within the powers conferred by this Act." He said that this again raised in a simple manner the question the House had just been considering.

Amendment proposed, in page 17, lines 22 and 23, to leave out the words "and is within the powers conferred by this Act."—(*Mr. Parker Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India had tried to make out that this question had been discussed in the English Bill, and, as he (Mr. Graham Murray) considered, had conspicuously failed. He could not substantiate his statement by any reference to *Hansard*. As a fact, he denied that the question of *ultra vires* was discussed at all when the English Act was under consideration. Then, it was a perfectly absurd assumption that because an injustice was perpetrated by a popularly-elected body it ceased to be an injustice.

*MR. SPEAKER: The arguments of the hon. and learned Member seem to be directed to the last Amendment. If they are directed to this, it only shows that it is a superfluous Amendment.

MR GRAHAM MURRAY replied that the present Amendment raised in a restricted form what was undoubtedly raised by the preceding Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 17, line 31, after "in," insert "relation to."

SIR C. PEARSON moved, in page 17, line 42, after "sections," to insert "sixty to sixty-five, both inclusive, and." He said he desired to incorporate in the Bill the portion of the Railway Clauses Act relating to accommodation works on land adjoining a railway when the Railway Company took land compulsorily. He might give an indication of the kind of accommodation works contained in the first of the clauses. They were gates, and bridges, fences, drains, and watering places, whilst the other clauses he proposed to adopt were those fixing the accommodation works which the promoters or undertakers had to carry out when they took land. When he made this proposal in Committee the main reply made to him was that he was extracting from the Railway Clauses Act provisions which related only to something in connection with railways. He admitted that in some cases the accommodation works were less likely to be needed than in others, and that some of them were more appropriate to the case of a railway than to any other case. But what was to be said as to the others? Take the case of fences. Let it be supposed that a Parish Council took land in the corner of a field for the purpose of a recreation ground. The field, say, was part of a farm and was perfectly well and sufficiently fenced before at the cost of the owner. What was to be said as to the fairness and expediency of calling upon the owner, part of whose land had been taken by the Parish Council, to put up a new fence? According to the law of Scotland it did not rest upon either party, as a matter of obligation, to fence at all, but if the occupier of the remainder of the field had stock upon it he would be bound to prevent it straying on to the recreation ground. There was an old Scottish Statute with reference to common fences between two properties, and either party could under that Statute go to the Court and say this was a case for a boundary fence, and if the Court made an order each party would have to pay half the cost of erecting and maintaining the fence. Such an order would be unjust to the farmer. A Public Body which took land compulsorily ought to be bound to fence it off at its own cost. The questions of drainage and watering places were obviously most important ones in the case of land being taken from a field or farm devoted to the grazing of stock. Justice demanded that the cost of these and all other accommodation works necessary for the maintenance of the remainder of the land in its original state should be laid entirely upon the takers of the land.

Amendment proposed, in page 17, line 42, after the last Amendment, to insert the words "sixty to sixty-five, both inclusive, and."—(*Sir C. Pearson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, he must congratulate his right hon. and learned Friend on the ingenuity he had displayed in raising a point which the ingenuity of all the landowners and all the lawyers of England had not suggested, or which, at all events, had not had the boldness to put forward. There was in the English Act no analogue at all to this proposal; and he was not surprised at it. The proposal was to import into this Act *en bloc* a series of provisions of the Railway Clauses Act which were applicable to the construction of railways. It was quite intelligible and appropriate that where a work of the peculiar and dangerous kind dealt with in the Act was carried through a man's land, such provisions as the right hon. and learned Member had referred to should be made. This Bill, however, did not give power to make a railway or even to build a house; it merely empowered the transference of land from A to B and, as far as he could see, the land when it was in the hands of B would be very much what it was while in the hands of A. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had taken fences as his leading case. If he only wanted to provide for fencing, why did he not move an Amendment respecting fencing and let it be argued out? The clause would do no injustice at all, because very full compensation would be given for everything that the person who had lost a piece of his land would lose. One of the things for which compensation was given was severance, and, that being so, the landowner would very likely be paid 30 or 40 per cent. more than he would otherwise receive. In one shape or another every penny of damage, as well as every penny of value, would be paid for under the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he was perfectly astonished at the speech just made by the hon. and learned Gentleman, knowing as he did what experience the right hon. and learned Gentleman had had. The case was really a very simple one. Supposing that under the provisions of the Bill half a field were taken for the purposes of a Parish Council, it was quite obvious that there must be a fence between the half that was taken and the half that was left. Who, in justice, ought to pay for that fence? Not the landowner certainly, because he wanted to keep the property that was taken from him. Nobody knew better than the Lord Advocate that a man could not claim under the name of severance for fencing. The machinery adopted by the Government in their Bill was the machinery of the Land Clauses Act, and the machinery of that Act assumed that accommodation was dealt with; yet the Government excluded an inquiry into that question. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that every damage done would be paid for. He (Mr. Murray) challenged him to say whether, in the whole of his experience, he had had to deal with a claim for fencing. If a field were divided, undoubtedly some consideration ought to be given for the necessary fencing between the two parts.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY moved to omit "or expert witnesses," in page 18, line 23, because he said he thought the provision would be unworkable in practice. He could understand the value of making these inquiries as cheap as possible, and that was why he had not chosen to try and interfere with the provision which excluded the employment of counsel. He had two objections to the prohibition of the examination of expert witnesses. In the first place, he thought that, if properly understood, it would exclude practically the only evidence that would be of any assistance to the tribunal. A still more cogent objection to the exclusion of expert witnesses was the difficulty of carrying it out. Who was to judge whether a man was an expert witness or not? He did not wear a ticket on his back or have an address in the directory as an expert witness. The right hon. Gentleman said the arbitrator could judge. Was the expert witness to be habited in a special dress, and was that dress to be green or blue? His right hon. and learned Friend who had been cross-examining expert witnesses for the last half-century might know an expert witness, but the people who were to make the inquiries—these three-guinea-a-day men—did not know them. The right hon. Gentleman must be aware that there was a border line in this matter, and that in some cases even the right hon. Gentleman himself would not be able to say whether a witness was an expert witness or not. There were people who were expert one day and not another. The clause would be unworkable. It would be worked in a different manner by every successive arbitrator. One arbitrator would take the view that a certain witness was an expert witness and another would hold that he was not. Was a man to go from tribunal to tribunal in order to get a certificate to show that he was an expert? He thought his right hon. and learned Friend would do well to re-consider this matter. There was no provision equivalent to a certification provision allowing a higher scale for witnesses of a certain class. Those witnesses would be simply charged as ordinary witnesses, and nothing else; therefore the cost of the inquiry would not be effected by whether or not certain witnesses were called who knew more than others.

Amendment proposed, in page 18, line 23, to leave out the words "or expert witnesses."—(*Mr. Graham Murray.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or expert witnesses' stand part of the Bill."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, the Government must adhere to the view they had hitherto taken, and which again he begged the House to remember was the view to which Parliament gave effect in the English Bill, which was its last word on the subject. The words objected to were identical with those in the English Bill. Their object was to keep the proceedings simple and inexpensive. He did not say that hon. Gentlemen opposite desired to make them expensive, but the Amendment would tend in that direction. The inquiries contemplated under the section were of a very simple character. A Parish Council, for instance, took a bit of land for a building or a recreation ground, and surely it would be no difficult matter to ascertain what was the market value of the neighbouring land and the value of the piece of ground taken. That was the normal kind of local inquiry, and they did not want an expert witness for an inquiry of that kind. Of course, where there were cases in which it might be desirable in the general interest to have the assistance of expert witnesses, the Local Government Board would have power to allow them. The words of the clause were "shall not except with the consent of the Board." In a complicated or difficult case the Board would consent. As to recognising an expert witness he should have thought the hon. and learned Gentleman would have had no difficulty in the matter. But, however that might be, the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to assume that no common sense would be brought to bear upon the matter. He should have thought that a very small grain of good sense would enable the arbitrator to say whether or not a person presented to him as a witness was a gentleman of skill, speaking not merely with knowledge of a certain half acre of land and the current prices of a certain neighbourhood, but with a knowledge of land and prices all over the country, and with extensive experience of railways and other great undertakings.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that, judging from his own experience, it might very well happen that land taken near a village, say for recreation purposes, might be the most valuable part of a farm. To take away that piece of land might interfere with the course of agriculture, disturbing the shifts on which the farm was necessarily worked. What could be more desirable in a case of that kind than the advice of a skilled person? They did not require gentlemen who had spent their lives and acquired fortunes in giving evidence before Parliamentary Committees, but he desired that competent men of well-known local experience should be able to advise the Arbitrator in cases like these. The Lord Advocate often had before him men like Mr. Drennan, who unfortunately was no longer with them. He was thoroughly conversant with agricultural questions, and he (Sir J. Fergusson) could name half-a-dozen such men who were skilled witnesses, though not professional, who could be called on with confidence to give evidence in such matters. If, in fact, the expert witness was excluded except in special cases there would rise up another professional person—namely, the skilled Arbitrator, who would have to possess a thorough knowledge of agricultural matters himself, because he would not be able to have agricultural experts called before him. These men would require good salaries, and their work would be important. If he had his time to come over again he should be inclined to become an arbitrator, and should certainly bring up one of his sons to the work.

Mr. PARKER SMITH said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not seem to admit that there was much difficulty in defining "expert witness." The difficulty was one that would be met with at every point. The Lord Advocate's argument was mainly one of expense. They were all agreed as to the desirability of keeping the expenses to be incurred under the Bill as low as possible, but surely that should be done directly and not indirectly. He suggested that a solution of the question might be found in providing that the Arbitrator should not,

"except with the consent of the Board, allow the expenses of any witness beyond the expenses specified in the rules to be drawn up by the Board."

That would limit the expenses allowed to witnesses, but not the class of witness who could be called. They would be sure, under the circumstances, that people would not be able to charge special expenses, and that Councils would not go in universally for expensive witnesses. That met the point of the Lord Advocate's argument as to the danger of making the thing expensive, and at the same time it avoided the difficulty of defining what was or was not an expert witness.

Question put, and agreed to.

*Mr. HOZIER moved, in page 18, line 30, after the second "any," insert "market garden, fruit garden, or." He did so, he said, in the interests of the Clydesdale part of his constituency. The fruit-growing industry was a very important one, and was a real blessing to many families of the poorer classes, in his own constituency as well as in Perthshire, and other parts of the country.

Amendment proposed, in page 18, line 30, after the second word "any," to insert the words "market gardens, fruit gardens, or."—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, the Government could not accept the suggestion. This clause did not deal with taking land for allotments, but only empowered the Parish Council to take land for a very limited class of purposes, and that would result in very limited areas being taken. He did not know why ground which was growing corn should be taken and ground growing strawberries or fruit trees protected, and in some parts of the country, such as the Carse of Gowrie, only such land might be available.

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY said, the right hon. Gentleman had forgotten his own Bill, and was wrong in saying that it did not have to do with allotments. This clause had nothing to do with allotments, but the next clause had, and the only restrictions in Clause 26 were those which were incorporated by reference to this Clause 25. Therefore, they were entitled to argue that Clause 25 applied to allotments. On the merits of the Amendment, he had in Committee instanced a very crying case for this Amendment—the case of Blairgowrie, where it would be disastrous that land should be taken for allotments from fruit gardens. On that occasion the Member for East Perthshire (Sir J. Kinloch) said unless fruit gardens could be taken, they would not be able to get land at all. But he had since made inquiry, and he had a letter which showed that for 1,000 acres in Blairgowrie not 100 were fruit gardens.

Question put, and negatived.

MR. RENSHAW moved to include land required for the amenity or convenience of a "church or school" among the exceptions under the sub-section. They might have a playfield immediately adjacent to a school and close to the end of a village. It might be very convenient for allotments, and it might be taken.

Amendment proposed, in page 18, line 32, after the words "dwelling house," to insert the words "church or school."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he could not imagine any body more safe to trust to in the contingency suggested than the Parish Council. They were not likely to take a playground frequented by the children of their own constituents.

Question put, and negatived.

MR. RENSHAW moved to exempt land around "factories." He pointed out that the section protected land required for the purposes of a railway or canal undertaking. Owners of factories, foreseeing the necessity for extension, might acquire five or ten acres in the immediate vicinity for the extension of their works, and it would be an injury if it were possible for the Parish Council to take away that land from them.

Amendment proposed, in page 18, line 32, after the words "dwelling house," to insert the words "factory, or workshop."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, he would undertake that the case of land for the amenity or convenience of a factory would be met in another place.

MR. RENSHAW asked leave to withdraw the Amendment on that understanding.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 19, line 6, leave out "for common pasture."

Line 7, after "extent," insert "for common pasture."

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY moved to delete from Section (c) the words "upon the determination of his tenancy," in order to insert "in respect of the land taken forming part of an existing tenancy." He said he thought the words of the clause were very unfortunate words, because the determination of a tenancy in ordinary legal language meant the end of the lease. That would be unintelligible in the particular collocation here in view; and therefore he put down this Amendment, which made no difference to what he conceived to be the true meaning of the section, but made it more plain to the arbiter who had to deal with it.

Amendment proposed, in page 19, line 27, to leave out from the word "tenant," to end of line 28, and insert the words "in respect of the land taken forming part of an existing tenancy, and."—(*Mr. Graham Murray.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, the Government were quite willing that the words should be left out.

Question put, and negatived.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY moved, in page 20, line 2, at end, insert—

> "Provided always, that in no case shall the sum *in cumulo* of the apportioned portions of rent be less than the rent formerly paid by the tenant."

He said that this was the sub-section which had given him most mental trouble. To explain the Amendment, he would take the case of a farm let at £100 a year. A portion was taken on lease by the Parish Council representing £10 a year. It might, nevertheless, be that the land left to the farmer after the severance was not worth £90 a year, but only £80, and the landlord would be left to get only £90 instead of £100 for the holding.

Amendment proposed, in page 20, line 2, at end, insert—

"Provided always, that in no case shall the sum *in cumulo* of the apportioned portions of rent be less than the rent formerly paid by the tenant."—(*Mr. Graham Murray.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, it appeared to him that there was a point here which might be met. No doubt it would not be right that the landlord's rent should be made less. The Amendment, however, would require a slight change.

Amendment agreed to as follows :—

"Provided always, that during the unexpired period of the tenant's lease the sum *in cumulo* of the apportioned portions of rent shall not be less than the rent formerly paid by the tenant."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to :—

Page 20, line 9, after "eight," insert "inclusive."

Line 9, after "and," insert "section fourteen and the proviso to."

Line 16, after "compulsorily," insert "either."

Line 18, leave out the second "of," and insert "not exceeding."

MR. MAXWELL moved, in page 20, line 29, at end, insert—

"And such compensation shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of The Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1883."

He said that this was the case in regard to the English Act, and as in this matter the circumstances of the two countries were identical, he submitted that the compensation should be assessed in Scotland in the same manner as in England. The argument of the greater expense under the Agricultural Holdings Act could not arise, because in this Bill the provision was for only a single arbiter.

Amendment proposed, in page 20, line 29, after the word "depreciation," to insert the words

"and such compensation shall be assessed in accordance with the provisions of The Agricultural Holdings (Scotland) Act, 1883."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Graham Murray

MR. T. SHAW said, the Government thought that on the whole there would be no harm done by leaving the clause in the general form in which it passed the Grand Committee.

MR. PARKER SMITH observed that the Solicitor General for Scotland had not answered the argument as to its being in the English Act. The Government had thought it judicious to put up a fresh advocate, the Lord Advocate having dwelt on the wisdom of Parliament as expressed in that Act. He (Mr. Parker Smith) thought the mischief of the Act as it stood was that no rules were laid down to guide the Arbitrator in awarding compensation as between the landlord and the Parish Council. At the same time, he would like to point out that very strict rules were laid down as to compensation as between the outgoing tenant and the Parish Council. It was provided that certain sections of the Allotments Act (Scotland), 1892, were to apply to this Bill. One of these sections dealt with the question of improvements, and stated that no building, tool-house, &c., should be erected, and if any building was erected, at the end of the tenancy, neither the Local Authority nor the incoming tenant should be bound to take such building or offer any compensation, and the outgoing tenant should be at liberty to remove the building. Therefore, as between the outgoing tenant and the Parish Council strict rules were laid down as to compensation; but as between the Parish Council and the landlord there was no restriction of any kind, and the Parish Council would be free to claim the full value they might put on the land. That appeared to him a rather extraordinary and irrational proceeding. The Amendment, as it stood, appeared to him to follow what, in spite of the Solicitor General, he considered the safe precedent, in many matters, of the English Act, and, at any rate, he considered that the same definite rule should be laid down in the case of the landlord as had been laid down for the Parish Council. It was only right that in some way or other the Arbitrator should be guided as to what principles he should act on in making his award.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to :—

Page 21, line 1, leave out "hired," and insert "taken on lease."

*MR. HOZIER moved, in page 21, line 6, after "winning," insert "or for feuing." The object of the Amendment, he explained, was to provide that feuing should be a proper reason for resumption by a landlord of land taken on lease by the Parish Council. He did not see that any harm could result from the insertion of these words, especially in view of the fact that the reason has to be shown to the satisfaction of the County Council.

Amendment proposed, in page 21, line 6, after the word "winning," to insert the words "or for feuing."—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, the Government could not assent to this Amendment. This clause dealt with a very special matter, and that was the right to resume the surface for the purpose of working the minerals which under the statutory taking were reserved. Of course, it followed that if the minerals were reserved they must provide for some means of getting at them, and, accordingly, power was introduced here for resuming the surface for the purpose of working the minerals. What his hon. Friend proposed was that land which, after all the safeguards had been observed, had been made over to the Parish Council under the conditions of a lease should be taken back for feuing. But if they were to take it back for feuing, why not for agriculture or anything else? It was simply another surface use, and no doubt that would be considered at the time when the grant was made; therefore the Government could not assent to this Amendment.

SIR C. PEARSON desired to point out that the Government by refusing to assent to this Amendment were putting a restraint upon a matter which their followers had often expressed themselves most anxious to facilitate. Ground was feued mainly for creating dwellings—it might be workmen's dwellings or villas. A Committee had been sitting upstairs for two years now with reference to an alleged infraction of the law of Scotland in this very matter. Anxious pleadings had been addressed to the Feus and Leases Committee against keeping up the restrictions which imposed a difficulty in obtaining land for building dwellings for the people, and the sole objection of the Government to this most reasonable Amendment was that it related to a clause dealing with another matter. But it happened to fit in perfectly well, and the Lord Advocate had not shown a single word in respect of which this Amendment, if inserted in this clause, would not work out perfectly well in the framework of the clause as it stood. He had considered the clause with great care with reference to this Amendment, and although the primary purpose, no doubt, was the resumption of land for working minerals, he should have thought that in the view of the Government themselves, it was at least as important a consideration for what the Lord Advocate was pleased to call surface use—that was inferior use——

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: No, no.

SIR C. PEARSON: Well, superior use, if he liked; but there could be no more pressing and urgent use of land than its use for the purpose of building houses for the people.

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR desired to point out that this was not a proposal to take land by the community for the purpose of providing dwellings, but simply that the landlord should claim back his land.

Question put, and negatived.

MR. CALDWELL moved, in page 21, line 24, leave out from "rate," to "in," in line 27. He said, that the object of his proposal was to restore the Bill to the position in which it was when it was introduced by the Government. By his Amendment he proposed to strike out the words limiting the special parish rate to 6d. in the £1, and which was a proposal the Government had accepted at the instigation of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He was very sorry to take up the time of the House even for a few minutes, but this point was of very great importance so far as his side of the House was concerned. This was the only part of the Bill upon which their constituencies were likely to feel much enthusiasm. It made a new departure by making provision for the acquisition of village halls, recreation grounds, and lands for dwelling, and these were purposes which would tend very much to develop village life. As amended, the special rate was not to exceed 6d. in the £1, and he maintained that for the important purposes contemplated by the clause such a limit would entirely destroy the value of the provision, as the 6d. rate was to include the repayment of the principal and interest of all money borrowed. Though the borrowing powers of the Parish Council were safeguarded by the provision that no money should be borrowed without the consent of the Board, yet they limited the rate to 6d. in the £1. In regard to parochial and School Board matters no limit was fixed, and he could not understand why the limit should be made in this particular case. If the clause stood as it was, the result would be that the Government would find the rate to be an utterly unworkable one. He looked upon this part of the Bill as most valuable for the purpose of leading to considerable development, but he thought the Government had spoilt the whole effect of their proposal by making the rate a limited one.

Mr. SPEAKER (interrupting): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but I understand he proposes to raise the limit?

Mr. CALDWELL: I propose to leave out the limit.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then that would put an additional charge upon the rates, and I am afraid that could not be done with me in the Chair.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The limit was put in by the Committee upstairs. As the Bill left this House there was no limit put in. It was on an Amendment upstairs that this limit was put in. We discussed it there, and if we provide a limit there, surely it would be possible to discuss here a proposal to restore the Bill to the position in which it left this House.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I was not aware of that. What I said was that it could not be done with me in the Chair. An Amendment must be made in Committee of the House, and not on Report, which raises the charge. If the hon. Gentleman likes he can move to re-commit the Bill, but he cannot do it with me in the Chair.

Mr. BUCHANAN: It is your ruling that it is not in Order to make a Motion omitting these words that were inserted in the Committee upstairs, and which, in the view of some of us, seriously modify this Bill?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The effect of that would be to raise the limit upon which the rates are charged. It has been expressly stated by the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill that he accepted the limit. Any proposal to raise the limit would be an additional charge upon the rates, and it could not be done with me in the Chair.

Dr. MACGREGOR asked whether the limit could not be entirely abolished?

Mr. CALDWELL: We do not raise it; we abolish it.

*Mr. SPEAKER: That means it may go higher, and that is clearly out of Order.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he would like to put this further point. A Committee of the House was set up to authorise expenditure connected with the Bill——

*Mr. SPEAKER: That was only with regard to salaries. This proposal is an additional charge upon the rates, and cannot be imposed with me in the Chair.

Mr. CALDWELL said, it was not for him to move that the Bill should be re-committed. He did not wish to delay the Bill, and he was satisfied with having made his statement.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member could re-commit the Bill on the Third Reading.

Mr. CALDWELL: We will consider it, and probably we need not do so.

Mr. MAXWELL moved, in page 21, line 36, after the word "or," to insert "is imposed." The Amendment raised the question of a rate upon the gross valuation according to established usage.

Amendment proposed, in page 21, line 36, after the word "or," to insert the words "is imposed."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, the Government could not accept the Amendment, but they were willing to consider any information which might be submitted to them relating to the point.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 23, line 3, at end, add—

"But such repair or maintenance of such roads or ways shall not involve the Parish Council in any liability for damages to person or property resulting from the condition in which such road or way may be maintained."—(*Captain Hope.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Sir G. TREVELYAN intimated that the Government would accept the Amendment.

Mr. CALDWELL thought that this proposal to relieve Parish Councils from liability was a very serious one. The matter should be explained.

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, the roads here dealt with were footways or bridle-paths or other tracks across the country. It might be desirable to empower, although not to compel, a Public Body to repair such roads; but as the Public Body were not bound to spend money out of the rates on these roads, the public using the roads should, it was proposed, take their chance of using them as they foundthem.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. RENSHAW moved to omit Clause 30 from the Bill. He explained that his reason for moving the Amendment was that this clause introduced a change into the system of road administration which was destructive of the whole system. He thought that the effect of retaining the clause would be that in future it would be difficult to induce a district committee to agree to the construction or taking over of new roads. Moreover, it was not clear what meaning the clause was intended to convey.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 30.—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 30 stand part of the Bill."

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, that the clause, at the time it was inserted in the Bill, was believed by the Government to be for the advantage of parish roads. Since that time, however, representations from a number of parts had reached the Government, pointing out that the practical effect of the clause would probably be adverse to the making of roads for the benefit of a parish by the proper Road Authority. It was feared that when the Road Authority was asked to make a road for a parish on the ordinary terms, that authority would say that if the parish wanted a road, it should get it made and pay for it under this clause. In view of these practically unanimous representations, they were prepared to assent to the Amendment of the hon. Member.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 23, line 26, leave out "or any of them."

Mr. MAXWELL moved, in page 23, line 37, after "persons," insert "not exceeding the number of the Trustees. He explained that the object of his proposal was to limit the number of Trustees which the Parish Council was empowered to appoint in connection with charities not transferred to the Parish Council, to the number of Trustees of the charity. He thought that the wishes of the testator or donor of the charity ought to be respected.

Amendment proposed, in page 23, line 37, after the word "persons," to insert the words "not exceeding the number of the Trustees."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he did not think it necessary to quote the English Bill with regard to this clause relating to charities, because Scottish Members of the Grand Committee, interpreting the general will of Scotland, had shown a much greater freedom in dealing with these matters than was displayed by the English Representatives, and by a large part of public opinion in England. Those charities were not ecclesiastical. What the Government proposed in reference to these charities was, that where the object was not ecclesiastical, but social and parochial—where the money was given for the benefit of all members of the community without any distinction of religion, the Parish Council, as the body representative of the whole parish, should have the power of putting a number of persons upon the management, who, if the Local Government Board approved, might be a majority, and would be a majority, he supposed, in most cases. The Scotch people, he thought, would have no objection, in the case of such charities, to the Parish Councils having the power, subject to the control of the Local Government Board, to appoint a majority of the Trustees. The principle of the clause had been approved by the Standing Committee, and he believed in that respect the action of the Government represented the feelings of the Scotch people on the matter. The proceedings of the Committee had been watched with much interest by the people of Scotland, as he should imagine, judging from the very full reports given of their deliberations, and he had heard no remonstrance of any kind from them against the action of the Committee upon this question. The Boards would represent the inhabitants of each district, and would be fully competent to deal with the secular interests involved in such trusts, and the Government could not consent to alter the clause in this respect.

Sir C. PEARSON desired to enter his protest against the course that was being pursued by the Government in reference to this question. A great deal had been said in a loose manner in reference to the importance of the Bill, and they had been constantly referred to the English Act and its provisions. He would not repeat on this occasion the arguments previously used, which were based upon fairness and public expediency in regard to the transfer of the management of these trusts. They were not ecclesiastical trusts, it was true; but on the grounds urged when the English Bill was under consideration, the House had arrived at a totally opposite conclusion from that which the Secretary for Scotland had come to. The view embodied in this Amendment was the only expedient one in the public interest, and its supporters urged upon the House the propriety of adopting it. He did not suppose they would obtain the concurrence of the Government in their views, but they wished to enter a protest against what the right hon. Gentleman had said with regard to the Charity Commissioners dictating in the matter. They disputed that altogether.

Question put, and negatived.

Mr. MAXWELL moved to leave out the words "unless the Board by order so prescribe." He pointed out that in the case of charities managed by the Commissioners, the Parish Councils would have a right to nominate a certain number of Trustees to act with the Burgh Commissioners; but that where there was already popular management by the ratepayers, the Parish Councils had no right whatever in the matter. Although that had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman, he had added at the end of the sub-section the words in question, so that the Central Board sitting in Edinburgh would have the right of interference in these matters. Would they have the right of inquiring whether the Burgh Commissioners, or the Town Council were properly discharging their duties in the management of a trust, and would they be entitled to say that the Parish Council should appoint, under those circumstances, a certain number of Trustees upon the managing body? There was no reason why the Central Board should have any right to interfere in these matters in Scotland, seeing that those bodies were allowed to be trusted in England. By the 14th section of the Parish Councils Act, the rule was absolute with regard to the Governing Bodies of charities other than ecclesiastical—that where the management was in a popularly-elected body, the Parish Council was not to interfere, having already quite sufficient work on its hands.

Amendment proposed, in page 24, line 3, to leave out the words "unless the Board by order so prescribe."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, this clause had been inserted to meet a special class of cases in which a particular scheme of management would have to be drawn up. He was quite certain that the Board would exercise a discretion in these matters, and would never interfere, except under special circumstances, and in such cases as had already been referred to.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. MAXWELL moved an Amendment to limit the number of members who might be appointed by the Board. He thought the same principle should apply to Parish as to other Councils, and that the number should be limited to three.

Amendment proposed, in page 24, line 13, after the word "persons," to insert the words "not exceeding three."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, this clause had been very carefully drawn, with the object of securing a limited number in place of a large amorphous body. The number mentioned had been carefully thought out, and the Government could not consent to alter it.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 24, line 14, leave out "in the," and insert "as a Committee of."

Line 15, leave out "them as a," and insert "the."

Line 15, leave out "of management."

Line 16, leave out from "accordingly," to end of sub-section.

Amendment proposed, in page 24, line 29, at end, insert—

"The term of office of a Trustee appointed under this section shall be not longer than three years, but a trustee shall be eligible for re-appointment."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CALDWELL said, the point of continuity should be kept in view in these matters.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, the persons appointed would not be sole Trustees. That should always be kept in view.

Question put, and agreed to.

SIR C. PEARSON moved, in page 25, line 9, at the end, to insert a proviso—

"The provisions of this section with respect to the appointment of Trustees shall not apply to any charity until the expiration of 40 years from the date of the foundation thereof, or, in the case of a charity founded before the passing of this Act by a donor or by several donors any one of whom is living at the passing of this Act, until the expiration of 40 years from the passing of this Act, unless with the consent of the surviving donor or donors."

This appeared to him to be a matter of principle and expediency as to which no one could say that there was any substantial difference of public opinion. His Amendment was taken word for word, with only one insignificant difference, from the English Bill. Its purpose was to exclude from the charity clause all charities until the expiration of 40 years from their foundation or where the donor or donors were alive at the passing of the Bill, until 40 years after the passing of the Bill, unless the donor consented. He recalled for a moment what had happened in the discussion upon the corresponding section of the English Bill. With regard to the 40 years' limit, various proposals were made. The Vice President of the Council suggested that a 30 years' limit should be imposed. Then certain influential Members on the Opposition side of the House suggested 50 years as the proper limit, and ultimately the Government agreed, he supposed on the principle of "splitting the difference," that a 40 years' limit should be imposed. He pointed out that under his Amendment no charity would ultimately be excluded. There was no permanence about it. The Amendment simply introduced a limit in the two cases he had mentioned in order to run out what he might call existing interests—those interests which to his mind were absolutely predominant, that of the living donor in the charity he had founded, and that of the persons connected with it, both on grounds of public expediency and considerations of equity and the plainest good feeling. Those considerations required that some limitation should be imposed before the clause laid its hands on charities of recent institution. During the last 40 years donors or testators had been in the habit of leaving charities under the management of certain existing bodies—in some cases to Ecclesiastical Bodies, in other cases to Parochial Boards, and in others to individuals. But in all cases they had had these bodies from which to make a selection, and in many they had deliberately passed over the body for which the Parish Council was to be substituted. It was only right, therefore, that their selection should not be disturbed. He thought it was essential that some such limitation as that he proposed should be adopted. It had been said that if donors had known that Parish Councils were going to be established, they would have thought so much of these Councils that they would have done differently. That of course was a purely conjectural statement, and the House must accept the fact that donors had chosen the existing administrators of their gifts. This had been considered just and right in the English Act, and justice and right equally demanded that it should be done here. With that view he proposed this Amendment, which had the merit of being on the lines agreed to in the English Bill by all concerned.

Amendment proposed, in page 25, line 9, at the end, to insert the words—

"The provisions of this section with respect to the appointment of Trustees shall not apply to any charity until the expiration of 40 years from the date of the foundation thereof, or, in the case of a charity founded before the passing of this Act by a donor or by several donors any one of whom is living at the passing of this Act, until the expiration of 40 years from the passing of this Act, unless with the consent of the surviving donor or donors."—(*Sir C. Pearson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he would certainly be very unwilling to accept any Amendment which was not founded either on public policy or the protection of private rights. This Amendment did not fulfil either of those conditions. The class of charities with which they were dealing were for purely secular objects, and exactly that sort of charity which would be best administered by a secular Representative Body. He would mention two or three specimens of such charities founded during the last 40 years. One in the County of Dumfries, founded in 1882, was a gift of £300 to the poor of a parish who had not been in receipt of parochial relief; another in 1888 was £630, the income to be applied for the benefit of five such poor persons and to purchase books for the children of such poor persons; and another in 1871 was £700 for labouring men's children. In such cases a wise testator would not have appointed a Parochial Body for the purpose of administering charities for working men and their children not in receipt of parochial relief. The Government proposal did not injure the donor, because the purposes of the charity would be better fulfilled if managed by the new body. Neither did they injure the object of the charity, for that remained the same. There was a general feeling in the country in favour of so dealing with charities of recent foundation, and it was difficult to suppose that in the progressive and enlightened state of public feeling in Scotland any sentiment to the contrary existed. As a matter of public policy, that being the case, the Government were bound to place secular charities in the hands of secular Representative Bodies. So far for the past. As for the future, whom did they injure? If a donor wished to give money for the proposed education or for the relief in clothes, food, and money to the general poor of the parish, he would do it with his eyes open, and he would give the money to be administered by the body whom Parliament in its wisdom had selected as the best body. If, on the other hand, he wished to leave his money for ecclesiastical purposes, he could leave it, as he could now, to the kirk-session of the Established Church or to any other religious body he liked.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 43; Noes 118.—(Division List, No. 224.)

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 25, line 11, after "electors," insert "on the application of not fewer than six of their number."

Line 11, after "Council," insert "including a landward committee."

Line 15, leave out "(Scotland)."

Line 15, leave out "1872 to 1883."

Line 20, leave out "parish."

Line 20, leave out "or assessment," and insert "levied by the Parish Council."

MR. COCHRANE said, the next Amendment was purely a drafting Amendment, the object being to give a means of identifying the parish. There were a good many parishes in Scotland of the same name; therefore, he moved to add the words "and county," making it necessary that every Parish Council elected under the Act should be incorporated not in the name of the parish alone, but in that of the parish and county.

Amendment proposed, in page 25, line 31, after the second word "parish," to insert the words "and county."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'and county' be there inserted."

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR considered that it was not a mere drafting Amendment. It would cause a very considerable amount of expense and trouble and would make it compulsory for nearly 900 parishes to take a second name, which they had done, and could in the future do, very well without. He therefore opposed the Amendment.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 25, line 36, after "shall," insert "unless re-appointed."

Mr. RENSHAW said, he desired to move to add—

> "Every committee shall report its proceedings to the Parish Council by whom it was appointed."

He hoped that the Government had considered this matter since it was discussed in Committee, and were now able to announce their readiness to accept the Amendment. As these words appeared in the Act with regard to County Councils, their omission from this Bill might be taken as an indication that reports need not be made by the committees to the Parish Councils who appointed them. Those who were familiar with the working of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, would appreciate the fact that all committees had to report to the County Council. He considered it undesirable that these words should be omitted from the present Bill so as to have it an open question whether committees of Parish Councils needed to report.

Amendment proposed, in page 25, line 39, after the word "loan," to insert the words—

> "Every committee shall report its proceedings to the Parish Council by whom it was appointed."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, that by Sub-section 2 of Clause 19 of the Bill Parish Councils could make their own regulations on this and other matters, and it was better to leave the point to the discretion of each Council. If a Council wanted a report from a committee, it would make a regulation to that effect.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 39; Noes 113.—(Division List, No. 225.)

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 26, line 18, after "Council," insert "or landward committee as the case may be."

Line 18, leave out "treasurer or."

Line 26, after "in," insert "sections sixty-eight to seventy inclusive, of."

Line 32, after "Council," insert "including those of a landward committee."

Mr. MAXWELL said, he wished to move an Amendment to the effect that the accounts should be audited by an auditor appointed by the Board instead of by an auditor appointed by the Parish Council, subject to the approval of the Board, as the Bill proposed. As the Bill was originally introduced, it provided that the Parish Council accounts should be audited by the county auditors, but it was pointed out that that would be objectionable. It was said that, however able these professional men were to audit, they were quite incapable of auditing the accounts of the parishes in Scotland. The Government saw the force of that, and adopted the system of the Bill, which was that the auditors were to be appointed by the Parish Councils, and approved of by the Board. The Committee adopted that system not because they thought it good, but because it was better than the system in the Bill originally. He hoped that in this case it would not be said that those who supported an Amendment of this kind were not prepared to trust the Parish Councils. He thought it had been generally recognised in legislation dealing with local government that the auditors who were to audit the accounts of these bodies should not be appointed by the bodies themselves, but should be in a position of entire independence, owing nothing to the bodies who appointed them. The reason for that was self-evident. Even if the audit meant simply a matter of account, and the auditor was bound to see that the receipts and expenditure were properly entered, it was desirable that the auditor should be appointed by some superior authority. The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. B. Balfour) would agree that a great deal of trouble would have been saved to many Parochial Boards if there had been some system of audit enforced as to their accounts, and many Inspectors of the Poor would have been prevented getting into difficulties and trouble if their accounts had been properly audited. If that were the case where an auditor had merely to see if the accounts were properly kept, much more was it the case where more than an audit was required—where the auditor had to satisfy himself that the payments made by the Parish Council were within the Act establishing the Parish Council, and where he had the power of disallowance and the power of surcharge. He thought that in such a case as that the auditor should be appointed by some superior outside body. It would be a difficult duty for a man who might have been appointed by a bare majority of the Council to sit in judgment upon items of expense incurred by that majority, and to decide whether they were really within their powers. In these cases it was, in his opinion, very desirable that the accounts should be completely overhauled by some central authority. He would further point out that what they desired in the case of this auditor was that their accounts should all be audited on the same system. They had 885 parishes in Scotland, and they would possibly have as many auditors. How would they secure that all the auditors would take exactly the same view of the expenditure of those bodies? Even in the case of the 10 county auditors in Scotland, they did not take exactly the same view of the expenditure by the County Councils. He did not think the Secretary for Scotland or the Board would be able really to satisfy themselves whether the appointment made by the Parochial Council was a satisfactory one or not, owing to certain Amendments having been ruled out of Order. If there was no sufficient efficient central audit they lost one of the things that existed in England in connection with Poor Law Guardians. The Amendment was important, seeing that the Parish Councils had not only to administer the Poor Law, but also in many cases to be the managers of local charities. He thought in these cases it was desirable that the accounts should be completely overlooked by some independent authority to see if the funds had been properly administered. He had understood the Secretary for Scotland to say he could not adopt a system of central audit for two reasons. He referred to the vested interest of the present auditors. He thought the right hon. Gentleman was under some misapprehension, because the present auditors were annually appointed, and he did not think they had a claim as having a vested interest. The right hon. Gentleman's second reason was that the Bill was sufficiently loaded, and that it would increase the burden if provision were made for a central audit. He thought, then, it would have been well if some part of the Bill had been omitted to make way for the insertion of a clause dealing with the question of audit. Two clauses of considerable length were adopted from the Local Government Act of 1889. The framers of the Act of 1889 founded those clauses on a Bill introduced in 1881 bearing the name of the Lord Advocate, which provided for a central audit in the case of Parochial Boards. That Bill was sent to a Select Committee, and was passed, and the introduction of some of its provisions in this Bill in Committee, with slight alterations, would have made the audit complete. He did not, therefore, think that the adoption of the proposal would have loaded the Bill to any great extent. The right hon Gentleman had objected to the expense of a central audit.

Mr. T. SHAW (Hawick, &c.) rose to a point of Order, and asked if the Amendment was consistent with a previous ruling of the Chair—on Clause 6, Sub-section 3? He submitted that if this Motion were carried the Board could either audit the accounts themselves or that an auditor would be appointed who would receive no remuneration.

Mr. CALDWELL submitted that the Board might appoint an auditor, and yet it might be quite competent for the auditor to receive his fee.

*Mr. SPEAKER said, he supposed there was to be an auditor somewhere; and the Question was, who was to appoint him. He ruled that the Amendment was perfectly in Order.

MR. MAXWELL (continuing) said, he did not think his proposal would increase the expense of the audit very much. The Secretary for Scotland seemed to be under some fear that the Treasury would in some way be affected. In the case of England a considerable sum was paid towards the remuneration of the district auditor—something like £12,000, he believed; while in Ireland, unless he was mistaken, the district auditor was paid entirely by the Treasury. He (Mr. Maxwell) did not look forward in his proposal to this charge being borne by the Treasury, though he thought they in Scotland had a right to claim some grant for that purpose. They acknowledged the concession made by the Treasury to the right hon. Gentleman in regard to the salary of one of the right hon. Gentleman's colleagues, and, presumably, that was all they could look for in one year. But this expense was, he took it, to be borne by the parish. Would it be a great burden on the parish? They had at present one central audit in London in connection with the School Boards, which was paid for by the Treasury, and cost something like £700 per annum, or rather under that amount. He was aware that the auditor under the Education Act had not the power of disallowance and surcharge, and had not to visit the parishes, so that they could not take that as an exact test of what would be the cost. But suppose each parish in Scotland cost £3—in many small parishes that would be too much; but, on the other hand, there were other parishes where there would be a great deal more. Take it, however, at £3 each as an average, that would give a total of £2,600. He calculated that the whole of this audit managed from headquarters might be done for a sum not exceeding £3,000, and he believed the work could be done much more efficiently than by the parishes acting for themselves. His proposal, in brief, was that the Board should appoint these auditors and prescribe the scale of remuneration to be paid to them.

Amendment proposed, in page 26, line 35, to leave out from the word "by," to the word "the," in line 36.—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR G. TREVELYAN said, he gathered that the proposal of the hon. Gentleman was that, instead of the Parish Council being allowed to recommend an auditor for the approbation of the Board, the Board itself should appoint the auditor and name the amount of his remuneration. Later on the Bill provided that the Board may provide a scale for the remuneration of auditors under this section, and if there was any disposition on the part of parishes to grossly over-pay or scandalously under-pay the auditors in respect of their duties under the section no doubt the Board would take advantage of the power so conferred. The system introduced in the Bill was introduced upon many representations made in Committee, and, as he thought, to the almost universal satisfaction of the Committee. A practical difficulty in the way of the amount was that it would be extremely difficult for the Board to name an auditor for every parish in Scotland. Moreover, when they came to deal with 800 or 900 auditors, it would give them an amount of indirect patronage which he would be sorry to see placed on their shoulders. He thought the proposal in the Bill was a very good one. Furthermore, he had no doubt that the Board would make inquiry when the names of auditors were submitted to them by the Parish Councils. He had hardly any doubt likewise that the Parish Councils, whom they must accredit with common sense, would select a great many of the auditors from men of of well-known probity and ability. It was a system that was simpler, which appeared to have little or no inconvenience in it, and which was well-received by public opinion in Scotland. He would not enter into that which formed a considerable part of the hon. Gentleman's speech —namely, the question of a paid public auditor. Mr. Speaker had ruled that it was in Order for a private Member to move an Amendment dealing with the appointment of a public auditor, but that it was not in Order for a private Member to propose the appointment of an auditor to be paid by the Treasury.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman the

Lord Advocate misunderstood the purport of the hon. Member's Amendment. He did not suppose that the hon. Member moved it because he was afraid that the Parish Councils would overpay their auditors, nor because he thought the Central Board would select better men than the Parish Councils. What he had to say was not meant to be in any way derogatory to the local accounting power of the parishes. There were in many parts of Scotland men quite fit to audit accounts ; but, if he understood his hon. Friend aright, his suggestion was made with a view to the securing of a central audit, and not necessarily an audit paid for by monies supplied by the Treasury. Unless the auditor was appointed by the Local Government Board, who held in their hands the whole string of the parochial administration of Scotland, they would not have the same government or administration going on in every part of the country. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had seemed to assume that the proposition for a central auditor meant an auditor appointed by the Treasury. It meant nothing of the sort. A contribution for the amount of work done by a man in each particular parish would be paid by each parish. Inspectors of Schools were sent down to the parishes to inspect schools, and a charge was made against the parish or the School Board. It was not provided out of the Treasury money. But the point sought to be raised by the Amendment was whether it would not be a much better system to have a central audit in the hands of the Local Government Board for the whole of Scotland. He was not going to repeat all he had said when the clause was moved by the hon. Gentleman in Committee ; but as all the points of that Clause were inadmissible—the clause having been ruled out of Order—it was a pity that in this matter Scotland could not be placed in the same position as England, when, if nothing else, they would at least have brought into public view the different methods in which the Local Bodies were administering the Poor Law. The central audit system was proposed in order that there might be a similarity and likeness between the methods of the Councils in the various parishes, not that, so far as the auditors hemselves were concerned, capable men could not be found in the localities in all parts of Scotland.

Mr. RENSHAW said, the Amendment had been brought forward in a most interesting and convincing speech, and the House ought to be grateful to the hon. Member for having brought within the range of the practical possibilities of the Bill the appointment of central auditors who would be an effective guarantee to the people of Scotland that these parish accounts would be efficiently audited. He was bound to say he thought the scheme of the Bill would fail if they were to have in each parish a separate and independent audit. What they wanted was a strong central audit which would command public confidence. The proposal of the hon. Member would provide for that without putting any charge whatever on the Treasury. The whole charge was to be borne locally, but the appointment of a public auditor was to rest practically with the Board or the Secretary for Scotland. It seemed to him that the Government had hardly considered the wording of Clause 69 of the Local Government Act with respect to this matter. Clauses 69 and 70 his hon. Friend wished to see incorporated in the Bill. Clause 69 provided that the County Council (and for the County Council in the present case Parish Council should be read in each instance) might pay to the auditor such salary and allowances as might from time to time be fixed by the County Council subject to the approval of the Board. That was what his hon. Friend asked for, and it seemed to him that having regard to the difficulties which would be overcome by this simple proceeding, that if they agreed to the proposal of his hon. Friend they would have a thoroughly effective and complete audit. Such a guarantee would be a guarantee to those of them who were a little anxious as to the operation of this change in Poor Law administration from the existing body to the new Parish Councils. His hon. Friend had placed new clauses on the Paper, and Mr. Speaker had ruled that the House could not deal with them, but they embodied the view which to a large extent they were anxious to provide for in the Bill. Their contention now was that the whole case would to a large extent be met by agreeing to a central audit. It would certainly be on the whole a much better audit than that provided for in the Bill, and having regard to the provision in Sub-section (5) of Section 70 of the Local Government Act of 1889 it would give to the ratepayers throughout Scotland a guarantee that in the event of undue relief being given or even a suggestion being made of expenditure taking place that was not warranted there would be a public control coming down and looking over the accounts once a year, and deciding whether or not these items were within the four corners of the Act. For that reason he thought the Amendment was well deserving of attention.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD said, he felt unable to agree with the Government on this point. His view was that to allow every body to appoint its own auditor was like allowing a prisoner to appoint his own gaoler. It was quite true that the appointment had to be approved by the Local Government Board, but nevertheless the auditor would know that he owed his appointment in reality to the body whose expenditure he had to oversee. He thought the Government should see that the business was accurately and justly done, and the feelings of these Local Bodies must not be too closely or unduly consulted. He greatly preferred a central or official audit of some kind.

Mr. CALDWELL said, he still held the view he had previously expressed in favour of an official audit.

Dr. MACGREGOR, being a moderate man in all things, wished to inquire whether there was any compromise possible in this matter? Why should not, as he had suggested before, the Central Board appoint auditors for each county, who would have the control of the parochial audit?

*Mr. HOZIER thought the Government should deign to give a reply to the observations made by hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House.

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, the matter was very fully considered upstairs. It was to be observed that the audit in a case of this kind would be primarily for the purpose of checking officials. That being so, the Government saw no reason to depart from the accepted method.

Sir C. PEARSON said, it was impossible to argue that the body interested in the accounts to be audited should themselves appoint the auditor. The country was beginning to see that this system would not do. It was a source of great financial difficulty, and he was surprised to hear any Member of the Government get up to defend it. A most cogent case had been made out against the Government, not only from that side of the House, but by their trusted supporters on the Government Benches, and in favour of the central audit, and when this question was thoroughly understood in Scotland he believed such an audit would be demanded. It was only following the precedent of the Local Government Act of 1889, in which County Council auditors were not appointed by the County Council, but by the Secretary for Scotland. It was similar in the educational system, and it was impossible to contend that difficulty would arise by requiring that one authority should appoint the auditor, and the body whose accounts were to be audited should pay the expense. He wished to express his regret and disappointment that the Government had not shown a disposition to yield a single inch on such a matter as this.

Mr. PARKER SMITH said, he might remind the Government that the Division in the Committee on this matter was one of the closest, being 28 to 24.

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he might rise for a moment's explanation. The Division was on the sub-section in Clause 6, giving the Board power to appoint such medical officers and Inspectors as the Board might determine. It was then moved to insert "auditors," whose salaries would have had to be paid by moneys provided by Parliament. No Division was taken on the question as to whether they should be appointed by the Parish Council with the consent of the Local Government Board.

Mr. PARKER SMITH rose again——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has already spoken.

Mr. PARKER SMITH: No, no; I had not sat down at all. Proceeding, the hon, Gentleman said it was quite true that the Division was not on this particular Amendment, but on one which exactly raised this principle, and a hon. Member tried this evening to move the same Amendment, and was ruled out of Order. Otherwise upon it they would have had this discussion. What they wanted to do was to secure similarity in the administration in the different parts of the country, and, what was still more important, they wanted to have a check on the administration of the Poor Law by an entirely new body in parts of the country where it was thought possible that abuses might arise. That check existed in England in regard to the Poor Law, and it ought to exist in this Bill.

Captain SINCLAIR said, he thought that the Parochial Boards appointed their own auditors under the present system. There was, however, the further point as to the advisability of giving the Local Government Board a power of revision or surcharge or disallowing expenditure incurred by Parish Councils. He believed there was some doubt whether the Board of Supervision had power to do that, and he agreed with the Member for North East Lanarkshire (Mr. Crawford) in thinking that such a power would be desirable.

Mr. MAXWELL rose to speak——

*Mr. SPEAKER said, the hon. Gentleman could not speak twice.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 97; Noes 38.—(Division List, No. 226.)

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 27, line 35, leave out "or," and insert "and the chairman."

Line 37, leave out "his office be a Justice," and insert "their office be Justices."

Page 28, line 4, after "or," insert "in a police burgh of."

Line 5, leave out from "Commissioners," to the first "and," in line 6.

Line 10, after "burgh," insert "police burgh."

Line 10, leave out "county or."

Line 10, after "district," insert "or county respectively."

Line 10, after "them," insert "respectively."

Mr. COCHRANE (for Mr. Parker Smith) moved, in page 28, line 11, after "otherwise," insert

"and which may appear to them respectively to be beneficial to any inhabitants of their respective districts."

The hon. Gentleman said the clause was for the purpose of empowering Town Councils or Borough Councils to keep open any right of way, while the Amendment provided that they should only keep open such rights of way as might be beneficial to the inhabitants of the district. He thought that was an Amendment which the Government might accept, because as the clause stood these authorities were compelled to keep open rights of way which might be of no use or interest to their particular district.

Amendment proposed, in page 28, line 11, after the words "otherwise," to insert the words

"and which may appear to them respectively to be beneficial to any inhabitants of their respective districts."—(*Mr. Cochrane.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*Mr. J. B. BALFOUR said, that if there was a public way through the area of administration, it was strong evidence that it was used more or less by the inhabitants, and, therefore, it appeared to them the proposal might be a very injurious limitation.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 28, line 12, after "May," insert "respectively."

Line 23, leave out "its," and insert "the."

Line 23, after "vindication," insert "of the right of way."

Line 27, after "if the," insert "county."

Line 38, before "It," insert "(4) Within a county, district, or parish respectively."

Line 39, leave out "within their respective districts, or," and insert "and."

Page 29, line 8, after "age," insert

"and any persons in right of heritable securities or other charges affecting such land."

Line 8, after "thereto," insert

"and that failing the persons in right of such heritable securities or other charges consenting, the Sheriff, upon the application of the heir of entail in possession, duly intimated to such persons (who shall be entitled to appear and object), shall have found that the lands comprised in such heritable securities or charges other than the lands proposed to be granted, afford adequate security."

Line 13, leave out "half," and insert "a quarter of."

Line 18, after "lawful," insert "in a county."

Line 29, leave out from "ninety-nine," to the second "one," in line 21, and insert "to."

Line 32, after "five," insert "inclusive."

MR. RENSHAW said, his Amendment was to omit the words "or any one or more of them." At present there was uniformity in burghs in regard to the option of putting the provisions as to lighting in force, and it seemed to him undesirable there should be a difference between burghs and special districts. There ought to be absolute uniformity, and he therefore begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 29, line 32, to leave out the words "or any one or more of them."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, he understood his hon. Friend desired to make it compulsory to adopt the group of clauses that would run from 100 to 105. They thought there should be a certain latitude of selection given, and that it might be dangerous to compel them to adopt the whole group of clauses.

SIR C. PEARSON did not think the difficulty his hon. Friend desired to point out was quite appreciated. There were eight clauses, all under the head of lighting; of these it might be desirable to adopt seven, and the proposal was to enable them to adopt one or more of them.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR: The Amendment proposes to make it compulsory to adopt all the clauses—from 100 to 105.

SIR C. PEARSON said, he would like to point out that one of the clauses had reference to the accidental breaking of lamps and the repairing the damage, and there might not be a desire to adopt that clause. They wanted to avoid the absurdity that a body could adopt any one or more of the group of clauses, one of which he had described, and another of which provided a penalty for the wilful breaking of lamps, the adoption of either one or the other of which would not in any way aid the lighting of the district. There was no reason whatever why these clauses should all be made optional.

MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, he could not conceive any body exercising the option of lighting the district and not adopting the whole group.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 29, line 35, after the word "the," to insert the words "streets, roads, foot-pavements, and footpaths."—(*Captain Sinclair.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, the words "foot pavements," were covered by the word "footpaths," and therefore, if those words were struck out, the Government would accept the Amendment.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR said, he was quite prepared to strike out those words.

Amendment amended, and agreed to.

On Motion of Mr. RENSHAW, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 29, line 39, after "twenty-seven," insert "and two hundred and fifty-three to two hundred and fifty-five."

MR. RENSHAW moved, in page 29, line 40, at end, insert—

"The providing and regulation of slaughter houses within the special district and the adoption for such purpose of the provisions contained in sections two hundred and seventy-eight to two hundred and eighty-six of The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892."

He would point out to the House why he considered it desirable these powers should be given to these special districts. As these were formed they would take the place of what otherwise might become burghs, and it was exceedingly undesirable that the powers conferred on these bodies for sanitary purposes should be limited in the only direction in which they were limited. Having regard to the clauses that the Government had either proposed or had agreed to insert, they would be limited in their powers unless something was provided in respect to slaughter houses. The provisions of Sections 278 to 286 dealt with the question of slaughtering. The first one provided that the Commissioners—that was to say, the representatives of the district committee — might licence slaughter-houses and make bye-laws for their regulation. Section 284 provided that if the Commissioners provided slaughter-houses no other places were to be used for the purpose. Although the provisions of the Act applied to the smallest burgh in Scotland, he did not imagine that under the provision of this clause any populous place would be formed in a district that was not larger than some of the existing burghs. He thought it was most desirable that provision should be made for the regulation of public slaughter-houses that otherwise might become a public nuisance. If the Government objected to Section 284 he had no wish to press it, if they would agree to the others.

Amendment proposed, in page 29, line 40, after the word "them," to insert the words—

> "The providing and regulation of slaughter houses within the special district and the adoption for such purpose of the provisions contained in sections two hundred and seventy eight to two hundred and eighty-six of The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*Mr. J. B. **BALFOUR** said, this was rather a serious proposal, because if a body possessed so much of the urban character as to provide slaughter-houses it would naturally become a police burgh. The object of the clause was to give areas—so far urban in their character, but which might include a considerable rural district—certain facilities in the way of lighting and cleansing, and so forth. It would be a serious matter, according to the provisions of this Bill, to set up slaughter-houses, because the effect of that would be that within a diameter of four miles no one else could set up a slaughter-house, and no one could kill beasts except for his own consumption. He had heard strong complaints against such a zone being drawn round even police burghs, so that a man could not kill a pig and sell it, though he lived in the country. If there was to be a provision for slaughter-houses there would require to be some greater protection given to individuals in the neighbourhood than there was here.

Mr. **RENSHAW** said, he had no desire to press the Amendment if the Government would see fit to adopt the other provisions.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. **MAXWELL** moved, in page 30, line 24, at end, to insert—

> "(3) Within ten days after the date of such resolution, it shall be competent for any person interested to appeal against the resolution to the Sheriff, and the Sheriff, not being a Sheriff Substitute resident within the district, may either approve or disapprove of such resolution, and, if he disapproves thereof, he may either find that no special district shall be formed, or may enlarge or limit the special district as defined by the resolution of the district committee, or may find that a special district shall be formed, and may define the limits thereof, and the decision of the Sheriff shall be binding upon the district committee, and shall be final except where it is pronounced by a Sheriff Substitute, in which case it may be appealed to the Sheriff."

He said, that a very important change was made in the Local Government Act. Under the Act an appeal was given to any five ratepayers to any district committee, but in this matter the decision of the district committee was made final, and no appeal was allowed either to the County Council or the Sheriff. He believed it to be most desirable there should be an appeal to some other authority. In the case where there was a division of opinion as to whether a special district should be formed or not, he thought the minority ought to have the right of appeal to some other authority in order to have the matter fairly tested. The Lord Advocate must be aware that in the formation of special drainage districts very important questions came before the Sheriff regarding the limits of the district. For example, a village might have a farm house in the outskirts, and the question might arise whether that house, and if so how much land along with it, was to be included within the district, and a question of that kind should not be left to the decision of the district committee, it being a question that would affect the rate and the extent of area to be rated for a special purpose. In a case of that kind an appeal ought to be allowed to the Sheriff, or, if the Government preferred it, to the County Council.

Amendment proposed, in page 30, line 24, after the word "Council," to insert, as a new sub-section, the words—

> "(3.) Within ten days after the date of such resolution, it shall be competent for any person interested to appeal against the resolution to the Sheriff, and the Sheriff, not being a Sheriff Substitute resident within the district, may either approve or disapprove of such resolution, and, if he disapproves thereof, he

may either find that no special district shall be formed, or may enlarge or limit the special district as defined by the resolution of the district committee, or may find that a special district shall be formed, and may define the limits thereof, and the decision of the Sheriff shall be binding upon the district committee, and shall be final except where it is pronounced by a Sheriff Substitute, in which case it may be appealed to the Sheriff."—(*Mr. Maxwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR G. TREVELYAN thought the proper authority for deciding administrative matters was the administrative authority which had been elected by the community. The Sheriff, it was quite true, in Scotland was not merely a judicial officer, and he (Sir G. Trevelyan) would be the first to admit that the Sheriff, when ordered to inquire into a question which partook of administration, brought to bear upon it something of the qualities of an administrator as well as of a Judge; but the authority which was really competent to decide upon the needs of a district was the authority which was the representative of the district. The district committee under the Bill would be a purely representative body, and would be large enough to be free from any mere local feeling; therefore, it would be an admirable court of appeal for all the purposes required under the Act. He could not imagine how there could arise any question of individual injustice in the formation of a special district that would require the interference of a legal officer.

CAPTAIN HOPE very greatly regretted the attitude the Government had taken up on this question. Speaking with considerable experience of the working of district committees, he could not but feel it would be advantageous to the inhabitants of a locality if they saw grave reason to object to the limit proposed, to have some opportunity of getting those limits revised and looked into by an independent authority. He was quite aware that some hon. Members opposite had great objection to the Sheriff; but he did not believe that was a generally accepted feeling in Scotland, because he found that the Sheriffs' decisions were looked up to as being very satisfactory, as a rule, and founded on a satisfactory basis. It might be that the particular administrative authority was the representative authority; but a representative authority was not necessarily infallible, and a representative committee or council might fall into error just the same as any other person or body. He thought it was very desirable there should be some check placed upon the representative authority, and he could not see any check that was better than the proposal of his hon. Friend opposite. He had the opinion that if a scheme would not stand the extra examination of a local inquiry and an appeal before a Sheriff, it was not a scheme that ought to be considered satisfactory for the general management of the district, and he could not see that any decision adverse to the opinion of the district committee would be in any way such as would be objectionable from any point of view of administration. He thought it would be a great advantage to a district committee to know there was this right of appeal in these matters as well as there was in regard to other matters in large districts. He did not suppose it was any use expressing the hope that the Government would reconsider their decision; but he wished to impress upon them the proposal was one that was most reasonable, and would be so accepted.

Question put, and negatived.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 30, line 42, after "enlarged," insert "or altered."

*MR. HOZIER moved, in page 31, line 10, to leave out "ninepence," and insert "sixpence." He said that, in the interests of the unfortunate ratepayers of Scotland, who would be very heavily taxed when this Bill became law, he wished to make the special district rate 6d. instead of 9d. His hon. Friend the Member for North-East Lanark (Mr. D. Crawford) complained of the Leader of the Opposition having called certain parishes of Scotland twopenny-halfpenny parishes. He would give his hon. Friend this consolation: that there would be no twopenny-halfpenny parishes in future, for under this Act they would become, at the very least, sixpenny parishes—that was to say, the rates would be increased by 6d., the amount of the special rate. He thought that was bad enough, and it was, thanks to their putting a limit on the rating powers of the Parish Council, that the rate was limited to 6d. But he still more objected to the idea of certain parishes becoming one-and-threepenny parishes—that was to say, having to pay ninepence of a special district rate in addition to the additional sixpence, and he was certain that a good many would rather be twopenny-halfpenny than either sixpenny, or, still worse, one-and-threepenny parishes. What he wanted to know in connection with this Amendment was, What was the view of the Government with regard to rates? It was all very well to bring forward two different arguments on the same subject, as the Government had done on the rate question, but he would remind the Government that Governments, like individuals, if they tried to ride on two horses at once, were rather apt to split up. The original argument of the Government was that it was quite unnecessary to fix any limit to the rating power, because, as the Secretary for Scotland said, the Parochial Boards of Scotland were so extremely economical that they would be horrified if 6d. was dangled before them as the limit to which they might possibly go. But the Government, when they got a little further on in the Bill, developed a new argument, and told them they need not be afraid of any extravagance being put into the Bill because, after all, they must remember the rate was, thanks to the Opposition, limited to 6d.; and that the 6d., though it would very often be reached, could not be exceeded. The argument used at the present moment was—There is a 6d. limit, and they could only cut their coat according to their cloth. He would remind his hon. Friend that that saying certainly implied cutting up the whole of the cloth in order to make the coat, and he was very much afraid that the whole of the 6d. would invariably be used, and in the special districts it would be worked up to as much as 1s. 3d. in the £1, so that, instead of having twopenny-halfpenny parishes, to which the hon. Member for North-East Lanarkshire (Mr. D. Crawford) took exception, they would have sixpenny and one-and-threepenny parishes in consequence of this Bill alone, to say nothing of all the other rates. The Secretary for Scotland constantly referred to the proceedings of the Grand Committee upstairs. He (Mr. Hozier) had no admiration for the Grand Committee, and he must confess the most unpleasant hours he had spent in connection with his Parliamentary duties were spent in that close and stuffy room upstairs, which was really unfit for human habitation. But even supposing that the Scottish Committee was as infallible as the right hon. Gentleman pretended it was—for in his heart the right hon. Gentleman did not think so—this question was not settled at all by the Committee. On the 24th of July there were two Divisions on the subject, the first being on the question whether there should be a limit for the special district rate or not, when 31 voted in favour of and 11 against a limit, and the second on the question whether the limit should be 3d. or 9d. He confessed that he felt very strongly in favour of the limit of 3d., but he now offered 6d. as a compromise in the interests of the very unfortunate ratepayers of Scotland.

Amendment proposed in page 31, line 10, to leave out the word "ninepence," and insert the word "sixpence."—(*Mr. Hozier.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'ninepence' stand part of the Bill."

Sir G. TREVELYAN: My hon. Friend has described with great accuracy the proceedings in the Standing Committee upstairs. This clause, which has been added to the Bill with universal consent and satisfaction, I think, is by many persons considered to be so valuable as to compensate for the loss which I think it is pretty generally admitted local administration has sustained by our not having had time to go through all the provisions of the sixth part of the Bill. I do not think there is any objection in any part of Scotland to the provision of these special districts, and I think they will be of benefit wherever they are wanted without being disadvantageous anywhere. They are intended for purposes which are not dealt with by Parish Councils, but which will contribute very largely to the comfort, convenience, and civilisation of the inhabitants. The main subjects covered are lighting, scavenging, and the provision of baths and wash-houses. It is quite evident that it would be mocking the country to permit districts of that kind to be created and at the same time not to give them a reasonable limit of expense within which their operations might be conducted. These are not mere Parish Council districts like those in the English Bill. They are important small centres which are to be equipped with something of an urban equipment, and which must, therefore, expect to provide something solid in the way of payment. Some hon. Friends of mine consider the 9d. limit to be far too narrow. I think it a very important thing to have a limit to begin with. Half-a-crown is the limit for a special district which can undertake drainage and waterworks, and 6d. is, I think, the limit of the public health expenditure outside. Ninepence appears to be a very good working sum within which the comparatively moderate services contemplated might be carried out. One thing the Government must object to is to pass a clause which would appear to be of very great advantage to the community, and at the same time to unduly limit the expenditure. Less than a 9d. rate the Government could not consent to accept.

MR. COCHRANE said, he could not understand the right hon. Gentleman's statement, that these districts would not necessarily be Parish Council districts, when the clause provided that it should "be lawful for a Parish Council or for two or more Parish Councils," &c. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it was very desirable that the clause should be accepted by as many districts as possible, but he thought a 6d. rate was quite sufficient to cover the duties that would have to be performed. In his speech on the Second Reading the right hon. Gentleman said that even a 4d. or a 3d. rate would be so extreme that it would frighten the people of Scotland if it were suggested. The right hon. Gentleman, however, was now, without any explanation, supporting a rate which was more than double that which he formerly regarded as excessive. If a rate of 6d. was enough to provide for recreation grounds and the purchase of land for workmen's dwellings, halls, and meeting places, &c., it was surely enough to provide for scavenging and removal of dust. In rural parishes many public baths were not needed, as there might be some convenient burn in which a good deal of the washing was done. The rate imposed under the Public Health Act of 1867 was 1s. 3d. in some cases, and in others only 3d. The Act was amended in 1871 so as to enable a 2s. 6d. rate to be imposed, and it was again amended in 1891, when it was provided that the County Council might levy a public water rate which was not to exceed 3d. It really seemed to him that under these circumstances a 6d. rate would be sufficient for the purposes of this clause. He thought it would be very advantageous if the clause were widely adopted, but it might lead to a great deal of opposition, especially if people were informed that they could be rated at 9d. in the £1. It would be wiser to begin with a rate of 6d., and if that did not prove sufficient it would not be difficult to increase it afterwards. He hoped the Government would accept the Amendment.

DR. MACGREGOR: May I remind the hon. Member that cleanliness is next to godliness, and that to object to the washing and cleaning of villagers——

MR. COCHRANE: The hon. Member has entirely mistaken what I said. I submitted that 6d. was sufficient to provide for such purposes, and I said I was very anxious that the various parishes should avail themselves of these powers.

DR. MACGREGOR: Well, if the Parish Council can provide these things with a rate of 6d. in the £1, you may depend upon it that they will not assess themselves any higher.

MR. RENSHAW said, he thought that the Government, in adhering to the limit of 9d., had taken a wise and prudent course. He admitted that when he submitted to the Committee upstairs that the rate should be fixed at 9d., he did so under somewhat hurried circumstances, the question having come upon the Committee by surprise. He had since, however, taken the opportunity of consulting those who were far better able to form an opinion than he was, and he found that they confirmed the opinion that 9d. was not too high a rate for the purposes and objects proposed in the clause.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes 108; Noes 30.—(Division List, No. 237.)

Amendment proposed, in page 31, line 10, after the word "pound," to insert the words

"on the annual value of the lands and heritages within the special district as ascertained for the purposes of The Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CALDWELL said, this Amendment practically made the rate 6d., as it was on the poor rate, which had the deductions of 25 to 30 per cent.

*MR. HOZIER said, that the hon. Member ought to know that these deductions on classification varied in different parishes.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 31, line 15, after "rate," insert "(including any special district rate)."

Line 22, leave out "in any parish."

Amendment proposed, in page 31, line 43, at end, add—

"Upon the formation of a special lighting district, under the provisions of this section, it shall be lawful for the district committee to adopt The Burghs Gas Supply (Scotland) Act, 1876, and, in the application of that Act, the expression 'burgh' shall be construed to mean special lighting district, 'Commissioners' Town Council, and 'Commissioners of Police' to mean district committee, and 'elector' and 'ratepayer' to mean a person registered as a county elector, the subject of whose qualification is situated within the special lighting district."—(*Captain Sinclair.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR said, the Government could not agree to the Amendment as it stood, as there were several provisions in the Gas Act of 1876 as to borrowing, &c., which were not consistent with the Bill. If an Amendment were proposed in a limited form, so that this difficulty was met, the Government would be willing to consider it.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Mr. D. CRAWFORD, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 32, line 3, after "burgh," insert "each police district formed under Section 58 of The Police Act, 1857."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Line 5, leave out "sixty-two," and insert "forty-five."

On Motion of Mr. D. CRAWFORD, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Line 16, after the second "of," insert "police district formed under Section 58 of the Police Act, 1857."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Line 18, leave out "sixty-two," and insert "forty-four."

On Motion of Mr. D. CRAWFORD, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Line 18, leave out "sixty-two," and insert "forty-four."

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Clause 47, page 32, line 28, leave out from "parish," to "before," in line 33, and insert—

"shall have effect for all purposes whether County Council, Justice, Sheriff, Militia, Parochial Board, Parish Council, School Board, Local Authority, or other, save as hereinafter provided."

Line 35, after "concerned," insert—

"and, upon the application of any one or more of such authorities, shall cause a local inquiry in terms of the principal Act to be held."

Line 39, leave out "thereafter," and insert—

"after the expiry of not less than forty days from the date of the publication of the proposed order in *The Edinburgh Gazette* finally."

Amendment proposed, in page 32, line 40, to leave out the words "and provided further that," and insert—

"and such order shall thereafter have effect as if enacted by Parliament unless or until revoked or modified by subsequent order in terms of this section."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. WALLACE said, he would like to have some explanation of these Amendments. The matter excited some attention in the Committee, and the right hon. Gentleman gave a sort of pledge that he would make some modification upon the part that was connected, at all events, with the subject of finality, so that the order should have the effect of an Act of Parliament. The clause should take, because last Saturday the Amendments they put down were totally different from, indeed the opposite of, the Amendments which the Secretary for Scotland had just moved. Last Saturday the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was that the order should not be final, but the present Amendments were to the opposite effect. On Monday a change seemed to have come over the spirit of their dream. These two proposals were diametrically opposite to each other. He had great respect for the decisions of the Scottish Grand Committee, but he did not think they could express "Yes" and "No" at the same time. His object in rising was not to taunt the Government with their apparent vacillations and contradictions. Those were accidents that must happen in all well-regulated Governments, but he wished to understand the exact meaning of their last proposal. As he understood it, the Order of the Secretary of State was to have effect as if enacted by Parliament, unless or until revoked or modified by subsequent Order in the terms of the section. He did not quite see how the proposal was to work, reading it grammatically. What he thought the Government meant was this—that if, on reflecting on the first Order they found it would be advisable to have a totally different Order, they were to make a new Order which should have effect as if enacted by Parliament. If that was the meaning he thought it was a considerable improvement upon the clause originally proposed. In the former proposal there was no provision for the Secretary for Scotland changing his mind, and they were now enacting that capacity for mutability in legislative phraseology. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on a proposal of that description. He thought it would be exceedingly useful in the history of Scotch local affairs. He should be glad to learn from the right hon. Gentleman whether he had correctly defined the meaning which the right hon. Gentleman appeared to adumbrate in the last proposal he had made.

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, this undoubtedly was a very important clause, and it was easy to amend it without altering the words so much. In the course of the Debates that took place in the Grand Committee he made one very strong statement and two promises. The strong statement was that, in order to enable parishes in Scotland to be grouped cheaply and readily, they should not be obliged to go through the form of carrying a Provisional Order through Parliament. The two promises that he made were, that if a parish objected there should be a public inquiry, and, in the next place, that the words that the Order should be final and have the effect of an Act of Parliament should be modified by some such words as

"unless or until revoked or modified by subsequent Order in terms of this section."

Hon. Members would find that this clause as amended by the Government exactly carried out those promises. It was quite true that some provisions of another sort did appear on the Paper; but those provisions were due to one of those mistakes which in arranging the Amendments to a Bill of this sort must occasionally occur. He gave directions that the clause should be amended in accordance with the promises he made upstairs, but the proceedings not having been studied with sufficient accuracy, the provisions were put down on the Paper to which his hon. Friend had made reference. Directly he saw the words he recognised that they did not quite accurately meet his promises, and accordingly he had them altered to the present shape.

Question put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. Trevelyan, the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 33, line 1, after "Board," insert—

"An Order of the Secretary for Scotland under the powers conferred by Section 51 of the principal Act of this section may, without prejudice to the generality of the aforesaid powers, provide for all or any of the matters specified in Sub-section 6 of Section 49 of the principal Act."

Mr. RENSHAW moved, in page 33, line 1, after "Board," insert—

> "Provided that if within one month after the publication of the Order in *The Edinburgh Gazette* any of the authorities affected by the Order Petition the Secretary for Scotland to cause the Order to be laid before Parliament, and such Petition is not withdrawn, or if the Secretary for Scotland recommends that the Order shall be laid before Parliament, the Order shall be deemed to be a Provisional Order, and shall be of no effect unless confirmed by Parliament."

He said that the insertion of this provision would be a guarantee to the Public Authorities, who also had set in motion the Secretary for Scotland in respect to any matter raised under Section 51 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, that in the event of the decision of the Secretary for Scotland not being in accordance with what they considered it should be, they should have an opportunity of getting it publicly reviewed. It was only on the representation of a County Council or a Town Council that the machinery of Section 51 could be set in motion, and it did seem to him that a County Council or Town Council would hesitate very much before they sought to set in motion such enormous powers as the clause in this Bill proposed to place in the hands of the Secretary for Scotland. He, therefore, proposed the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 33, line 1, after the last Amendment, to insert the words,—

> "Provided that if within one month after the publication of the Order in *The Edinburgh Gazette* any of the authorities affected by the Order Petition the Secretary for Scotland to cause the Order to be laid before Parliament, and such Petition is not withdrawn, or if the Secretary for Scotland recommends that the Order shall be laid before Parliament, the Order shall be deemed to be a Provisional Order, and shall be of no effect unless confirmed by Parliament."—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. R. WALLACE said, he did not receive from the right hon. Gentleman any indication of whether he had correctly guessed the meaning of the clause, and, therefore, he really was not quite certain whether the new clause the right hon. Gentleman had proposed would have the effect which he hoped it might have, of to a certain extent modifying the extremely great powers he had taken to himself in this Bill in Scotch affairs, and, therefore, as at present advised, he must say he should like to have the security or something like the security that the right hon. Gentleman accidentally and unintentionally put before them in the Saturday's edition of the Amendments to the Bill. What check had they upon the action of the Secretary for Scotland unless the matter was to come before Parliament, and Parliament was to have the power to deal with it? The only check they had at present against any unwise action on the part of the Secretary for Scotland was, he presumed, to move a reduction of his salary in this House. But they knew that the opportunities for making such Motions were exceedingly scarce, and occurred at a season when Parliament was in very small attendance, and everybody was anxious to get away. He had been eight years in that House; he had seen the action of both sides of the House, when in power, in connection with the Estimates, and the conclusion he had formed was that the officialism of the Government, moved by the invisible officialism which was often more powerful than the Treasury Bench, desired to escape the criticism of Parliament on the matters of the Estimates. All the years he had been in Parliament the Estimates had been rapidly scamped. The opportunities for discussing them were exceedingly unfavourable and sufficiently few, and he did not think a sufficient check was provided in the Bill, upon the action of Secretaries for Scotland in these matters. It was all very well to say he was responsible to Parliament, but if Parliament was denied the opportunity of making him responsible—he was practically an autocrat. He should be glad of some such additional check upon the action of the Secretary for Scotland as was provided in the Secretary's unintended clause. In the absence of such security, and as matters stood, he was inclined to support the hon. Gentleman opposite.

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, they now came to the really critical question in this clause—namely, whether they were to have a Provisional Order or not in order to enable parishes in Scotland to be divided. He asked the House to hesitate before it insisted on the Provisional Order. Since this question of Parish Councils had been before the House there had been no subject upon which such general interest had been shown in every quarter of Scotland as the sort of hope there was in parishes and burghs that the anomalous arrangements of the different parishes one with another might be corrected by some possible process. What was the process at present? The County Council or Burgh Council had to apply to the Secretary for Scotland, and the Secretary for Scotland had to carry through the process under the shadow of a Provisional Order the expense of which could not possibly be faced by a poor parish. His firm impression was that the majority of the Scotch communities and their Representatives were in favour of some cheaper mode of carrying through this object. Could the hon. Member seriously think that he (Sir G. Trevelyan) or any other Secretary for Scotland could have any possible object in putting arbitrary powers into force in order to unite this or that parish or this or that portion of a parish? His hon. Friend himself proposed in this Bill, without any inquiry whatever, with nothing except the arbitrary section of a Parliamentary Act, to unite all the parishes of Edinburgh—that was to say, at the wish of one of six parishes to unite to it five reluctant parishes. These five parishes objected, and yet they were to be united without being heard. He had felt that there were certain objections to the clause as it first appeared, and that there were certain safeguards that ought to be inserted—the safeguard of a public inquiry, and the safeguard of the decision not being irrevocable. These had been inserted, and he thought it would be a great disappointment to the parishes of Scotland if they were thrown back on the difficult and expensive—to most of them, the impossible—method of obtaining Provisional Orders before such change could be made in this matter.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 33, line 2, after "repealed," insert—

"And the said section shall be read as if for the words 'county burgh or parish,' occurring in proviso (ii) thereof, there were substituted the words 'county or burgh;' and the words 'this Act,' in sub-section (*g*) of the said section, and in sections ninety-five and ninety-six of the principal Act, shall be construed as meaning 'the Local Government (Scotland) Acts.'"

Line 4, leave out "eleventh," and insert "fifteenth."

Line 4, leave out "December," and insert "May."

Line 5, leave out "ninety-four," and insert "ninety."

Line 9, leave out "eleventh," and insert "fifteenth."

Line 9, leave out "December," and insert "May."

Line 10, leave out "ninety-four," and insert "ninety."

DR. MACGREGOR moved, in page 34, line 13, after "passed," to insert—

"except in the case of medical officers, who shall not be liable to dismissal without the right of appeal to the Board."

He said he moved this Amendment in the Committee upstairs, and though he was defeated there by only a small majority he had no intention of troubling the House on Report with this question again, and should not have done so except for the fact that only this morning he had received a letter from a well-known medical officer in Scotland complaining that he had been dismissed, after 20 years' service, without knowing the reason for his dismissal. He thought they should put the medical officer on a par with the Inspector of Poor and other officials, who were not removable without appeal to the Central Board, which at present was the Board of Supervision. He wished to protect them against capricious or unjustifiable removal. The present Board of Supervision were in favour of this proposal, for in reply to an inquiry they wrote that in the public interest and in the interest of the medical officers they would be glad if these officers were not subject to capricious and unjustifiable dismissal. The proposal was a fair and reasonable one, and he could see no grounds upon which the Government could decline to accede to it. He therefore proposed the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 34, line 13, after the word "passed," to insert the words

"except in the case of medical officers, who shall not be liable to dismissal without the right of appeal to the Board."—(*Dr. MacGregor.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir G. TREVELYAN, whilst recognising that the opinion of the Board of Supervision should receive its due weight, said that they must consider this question on its merits, and likewise in connection with the time at which it was brought forward. He must own that he was rather prepossessed against this proposal to limit the powers of the new Parish Councils as compared with the powers possessed by the present Parochial Boards. This power was possessed by the Parochial Boards, and he must say he thought the Parish Councils would equally judiciously exercise the power. The proposal of his hon. Friend, he had no doubt, would meet with great acceptance in his own profession, and likewise among all who were friends of that profession. But there was something to be said on the other side. With regard to the Inspector of the Poor and the Medical Health Officer of a great district, he had administrative work to perform, and it was comparatively easy to see whether that administrative work was done properly or not. If he failed in doing it it was comparatively easy for the County Council, which employed the one, or the Parochial Board, which employed the other, to bring a specific complaint to the Board of Supervision and ask them to remove the officer. Bnt it was not quite the same thing with regard to the Medical Officer who attended the poor of the district. It might very well be that the Board were acquainted with certain things about these officials which might not be the subject of a definite charge that they were careless, lazy, difficult to get on with, or with something against their characters. It would be a very serious burden to lay upon the Parish Council to say that they should not be able to transfer the care of the poor of their district from one medical man to another without formulating a specific complaint against him to the Department. Take the case of a schoolmaster. It would be very hard if they were unable in the last resort to get rid of a man whom they found it utterly impossible to get on with, or who had something against him detrimental to his character. If a specfic complaint had to be formulated to a tribunal sitting in Edinburgh, there might be an appeal to London. He sympathised to some extent with the object of his hon. Friend, but he was not prepared, at this time, to make so great a change in the Poor Law of Scotland, and least of all was he prepared to make it at a time when they were transferring the duty of supervising the care of the poor to a new body.

Mr. GRAHAM MURRAY said, that if the Amendment was agreed to it would not take away the power of dismissal from the Parish Council, but only the power of dismissing an official capriciously. The effect would be to get a better class of medical men by giving them some security of tenure. The right hon. Gentleman said reasons sometimes existed which could not be expressed, but that was simply alleging the old objection—

"I do not like thee, Doctor Fell,
The reason why I cannot tell,"

—always a very bad reason indeed.

Mr. COCHRANE said, the medical officer was to a large extent the servant, and under the direction, of the Local Government Board, and it was only fair, therefore, that he should have the right of appeal to the Board. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland said the School Boards had such a power of dismissal; but that was a mistake, for there was an appeal—at any rate, provision was made preventing frivolous dismissals. He submitted that it would be most improper for medical officers to be dismissed on hearsay complaints, and he felt sure the Local Government Board would not permit it, though no doubt if a medical man were careless they would dismiss him. A Sanitary Inspector could not be so dismissed. Under the Public Health Act the Board had power to make regulations, and medical officers were obliged to send in Reports from time to time. The medical officer of a parish might incur a certain amount of odium in carrying out the Regulations, and there were many reasons why medical officers should be placed in at least the same position as Poor and Sanitary Inspectors in this respect. No structural alteration would be made in the Bill by this Amendment, and, on the other hand, the same class of men would not be obtained if they were liable to dismissal at a moment's notice.

MR. W. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) supported the Amendment as a valuable provision in favour of medical officers, an important class of the community, who would be dealt with probably in a Local Government measure for Ireland next Session. Medical officers under this kind of supervision might sometimes meet with very bad treatment, and it was quite necessary, therefore, that a right of appeal should be given.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 36; Noes 97.—(Division List, No. 228.)

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY moved an Amendment providing that in matters relative to Poor Law administration the Poor Inspector should act as Clerk of the Council. It had been considered that Parish Clerks should be enabled to appoint clerks other than the Poor Inspector, because many new duties were imposed under this Act, but it would certainly be very unfortunate if the work of the Department for the administration of the Poor Law were changed from what it had been hitherto. So far the Poor Inspectors had acted as clerks, had kept the books and had been in touch with the Board of Supervision, as they would now be with the Local Government Board. That arrangement had worked well, and it would be a pity if it should be dislocated. Inspectors of the Poor in Scotland should have the same rights as officials in that position in England and Ireland. It seemed very hard that their future should not be assured to them as in the Sister Countries when they had done their duty, and should not be turned off in a round-about way. At present they could not be dismissed without the consent of the Board of Supervision, but under this clause they might be put to other duties and their position made unbearable. He, therefore, put the Amendment on two grounds: first, the necessity of keeping these officials to the work of the Poor Law Department; and, secondly, that it was the only way of protecting them against dismissal in a way not contemplated by the Act.

Amendment proposed, in page 34, line 21, after the word "Council," to insert the words—

"Provided always, that in relation to all matters relating to the Poor Law administration the Inspector of Poor shall act as Clerk to the Council."—*(Mr. Graham Murray.)*

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. J. B. BALFOUR suggested that perhaps the same object might be attained by varying the phraseology without making an affirmative declaration that the Inspectors should do a particular class of work. He quite agreed that safeguards should be provided that these officials should not be put to an inferior class of work, so as by a sort of side-wind to procure their dismissal or anything of that kind. He hoped to propose a better form of phraseology to carry out that object, but that would be a matter for arrangement.

MR. GRAHAM MURRAY said, that if consideration were given to the point he was willing to withdraw his Amendment.

*MR. HOZIER said, he was much disappointed that no provision would be made for the superannuation and compensation of officials, but he was glad to note this slight concession.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed, in page 34, line 21, after the word "Council," to insert the words—

"Provided that, if the services of any officer are dispensed with under the provisions of this sub-section, the Parish Council, with the consent of the Board, may grant compensation to such officer."—*(Mr. Hozier.)*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

On Motion of Sir G. TREVELYAN, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 35, line 16, after "that," insert "if not inconsistent with the context."

Line 17, leave out "this Act the principal Act," and insert "the Local Government (Scotland) Acts."

Line 20, leave out from "1892" to end of sub-section, and insert "has the meaning assigned to it in The Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892."

Line 24, after "local Act," insert—

"The expression 'municipal register' includes the register of voters for the election in a police burgh of Burgh Commissioners."

"The expressions 'municipal election,' 'municipal electors,' and 'municipal wards' include the election of Burgh Commissioners in a police burgh, the voters at, and the wards constituted for, such election respectively."

Line 26, after "parish," insert—

"means a parish *quoad civilia* which is at the passing of this Act or may hereafter be constituted a separate parish for the purposes of settlement and relief of the poor, and."

Line 30, after "burgh," insert—

"and the expression 'landward parish' means a parish no part of which is comprised within the boundaries of a burgh."

Page 36, line 3, after the second "burgh," insert "and shall include the burgh of Coatbridge."

Page 36, leave out lines 4 and 5.

Clause 57, page 38, line 34, after "ninety-five," insert—

"and shall be summoned by the Inspector of Poor in the manner provided by Sub-section 2 of Section 17 of this Act."

Sir G. TREVELYAN appealed to the House to allow the Third Reading to be taken.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Sir G. Trevelyan.*)

Sir G. TREVELYAN said, he was very glad to take that opportunity of thanking most sincerely and from his heart, first the Scottish Members for having given such very great and continuous pains to make the Bill a measure worthy of Scotland, and next the House generally, for having during the two days the Bill had been under consideration on Report discussed the measure in a friendly and, considering the time expended upon it, a most efficient manner. He believed there seldom had been a measure discussed in a fairer spirit from first to last, and he was quite certain that the result would show itself in every clause of the Bill. It was a Bill which represented the real opinion of Scottish Members upon Scottish interests; it established local centres of self-government all over Scotland, which would be able to carry out those objects which by common consent were agreed upon as proper subjects, and as time went on these powers of self-government would, no doubt, be extended to other matters, which, in their turn, might come forward.

Mr. RENSHAW hoped that the Government would, between the present time and the time the Bill would be considered in the House of Lords, reconsider their decision as to audit, so as to devise a plan of central audit which would be generally acceptable. He looked upon the proposed system of audit as one of the blots of the Bill. There was another matter on which he hoped the Government would give them some assurance. He urged the Secretary for Scotland to give them an assurance that some of the important clauses in Part VI., which were dropped for want of time, would be introduced in another Bill next Session.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL. (No. 156.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in the Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

***Sir A. ROLLIT** (Islington, S.) moved, in page 1, line 5, after "have," insert "either alone or jointly with any other Railway Company or Companies." The clause as it stood enabled traders to have excessive rates, but in the case of a single Company only, remedied by an appeal to the Railway Commissioners. But as through rates were even more important, the object of the Amendment was to provide that the power of revision should extend to a rate made by or on behalf of two or more Companies jointly, as well as to a rate made by a single Company. The Bill was not all that might be desired; but as it might be made the basis of future useful reforms, he would not waste a single word at that hour of the night in delaying its progress through Committee.

He would, therefore, content himself with moving the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 5, after the word "have," to insert the words "either alone or jointly with any other Railway Company or Companies."—(*Sir A. Rollit.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): Like my hon. Friend, I do not desire to waste any time. I will therefore only say that this Amendment is a reasonable and a proper one, and I am glad to accept it.

Question put, and agreed to.

*SIR A. ROLLIT moved to insert, in page 1, line 6, after "ninety-two," the words "directly or indirectly." He said that the object of the Amendment was specially to meet two classes of cases. The first was that in which the rate was indirectly increased by the Company ceasing to carry a large customary quantity, say 21 cwt. to the ton, and only carrying 20 cwt. The second was that in which onerous conditions were imposed in owners'-risk notes, amounting sometimes pecuniarily to, say, 10 per cent. by way of extra insurance. His words, if inserted, would secure that the rates in those two instances should not be excessive but reasonable.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 6, after the words "ninety-two," to insert the words "directly or indirectly."—(*Sir A. Rollit.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. BRYCE: We accept the Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. D. PLUNKET (Dublin University) moved, in page 1, line 9, after "the," to insert "increase of the." It was a verbal Amendment with the object of clearing up the meaning of the clause, which was admitted on all hands to be obscure. Different constructions had been put upon the words of the clause, as they stood, by high legal authorities; and the Amendment, which had been agreed to by both sides in the controversy, would give effect to the intention of the Report of the Committee on which the Bill was founded.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the words "the," to insert the words "increase of the."—(*Mr. D. Plunket.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. BURNIE (Swansea, Town) said, he regretted that he must oppose the Amendment. He thought the Bill ought to be allowed to remain in the form in which it was presented to the House. The object of the Amendment was to prohibit traders from challenging the reasonableness of any rate, and limiting them to the right to appeal only against the increase of the rate since December 31, 1892. The Committee should bear in mind that when, in January, 1893, the Railway Companies increased their rates, an agitation sprang up throughout the length and breadth of the country in consequence of the injury to trade and agriculture brought about by the increased rates. A Select Committee, of which he had had the privilege of being a Member, sat for some months considering the subject; and the whole of the evidence laid before that Committee on behalf of the traders and agriculturists was in favour of having restored to them what they lost by the Act of 1888. When that Act was passed and the Provisional Orders which followed it came into force the traders found that they had not only been mulcted with the legalisation of terminal charges, but had been deprived of one of their most important defences against extravagant rates—namely, their right to challenge the whole of the rates of the Railway Companies on the ground of unreasonableness. By leaving the Bill as the Government introduced it the traders would be restored to their old position with respect to any rates increased by the Railway Companies after 1892, because they would have the opportunity of challenging the reasonableness of the whole of such rates, and not merely the increases in them. He regretted the hon. Member for Northamptonshire had withdrawn his earlier Amendments, the object of which was to put the traders on this point into the position which they occupied before the Acts of 1888. He asked hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to use their efforts to restore to the traders this right, which, with other valuable privileges, the traders lost by the legislation of the late Government. If the Amendment were carried it would spoil any good that was in the Bill; the traders would look upon the Bill as of no value at all. What would happen, if the Bill passed amended in that way, was that a newer and a stronger struggle on the part of the traders against the railway rates would arise, for it was impossible that the traders could sit down quietly under such a Bill.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, that though he agreed with some of the remarks of the last speaker, he should certainly under the circumstances counsel the acceptance of the Amendment. From the point of view of the traders this Bill could only be accepted as an instalment of justice. He agreed that the traders had a right to expect that the Government would have taken steps to restore to them the right which was inadvertently lost by the Act of 1888—namely, the right to attack all rates with regard to reasonableness. But it was quite clear, he thought, that if they attempted to find a remedy for all the evils that traders suffered from, it would be impossible to get a Bill on this subject through the House this Session; and the question for the traders and for the House was whether they would accept an imperfect Bill or none at all. The interpretation of the Bill as framed would, he thought, be of an uncertain character, and it was of doubtful advantage to the traders to give them a clause of uncertain meaning. At the same time, it must be admitted that the Amendment proposed to put the Railway Companies' interpretation upon the ambiguous words of the clause. He thought, however, that under the circumstances the traders ought to be advised to accept the Bill, lame and halting though it was with the suggested Amendment. The Railway Companies had got their heels upon the traders. Many traders thought the country had kept back the difference between the rates of 1892 and 1893, and there was no doubt that if some relief was not given they would have the Railway Companies pressing for the extra amount of rates. That was a hardship to which it would not be wise to leave the traders exposed; and he thought, therefore, it was better to accept the Bill even with the Amendment, recording at the same time a protest against its insufficiency.

*MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that although he agreed with many of the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Preston, he rather supported the view of the previous speaker, his hon. Friend the Member for Swansea Town. He wished at once to say that some of the remarks which fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University did not quite accurately represent the position taken up by some Members, including himself, who had taken part in the conferences with the Railway Companies and the Board of Trade on this question. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would bear him out in saying that at the conference which took place between the representatives of the traders and the Railway Companies he expressly disclaimed acceptance of this Amendment, and he disclaimed acceptance of it at the private meeting of traders which considered the matter. He regretted that the Government had not afforded time to discuss the present Bill fairly, and in such a way that the issues involved in the Amendment could be thoroughly threshed out before the House. He did not think anyone could doubt that the Amendment, which was a concession to the Railway Companies, would have been rejected by the House by a considerable majority if the House had time to deal with it. But the House was now in the position that it could not reject the Bill as it stood. Undoubtedly there was a feeling amongst many classes of traders in the country as to the risk of pressure from the Railway Companies with regard to outstanding accounts. Personally, he thought that alarm a delusion. He believed that if the traders only showed fight and a determination to see the matter out with the Railway Companies, the Companies would not venture to press their claims, and a very much stronger Bill might be passed next year. But confining himself strictly to the Amendment, his objection to it was that, as everyone on the Committee last year must know, the whole argument of the Railway Companies seemed to be the argument of recoupment. Therefore, if the functions of the Railway Commissioners were limited to increases in rates added since 1892, the Railway Companies would be in the position to go before the Commissioners and argue that, because certain rates had been cut down, they had a right to make increases in other rates. That would place the traders in a most serious position, because they would be precluded from dealing fully with the question of increases and how they arose, and the power to obtain the analysis of a rate would help little if there was no jurisdiction as to the whole of the rate and its component parts. He objected to the Amendment, as he objected to the whole of the first clause, because it seemed to him that it most effectually sanctioned the rates of 1892. The position of the traders all along was, that a very large proportion of those rates were not reasonable, and ought to be altered; and the Commissioners should be in a position to deal fully with those rates. To say that the rates prevailing before 1892 were unchallengable was most unfair to the traders. It was a very serious blunder; and a blunder which the Government might have to rectify in the near future.

Colonel NOLAN said, that some of the Irish Railway Companies went on increasing many of their rates to an enormous extent, and gave as a justification for doing so the fact that, the Bill of 1892 having cut down some of their charges, they were obliged to increase those that did not come within the scope of this Bill so as to compensate for the reduction. Practically, therefore, the Bill of 1892 was inoperative. He did not see what was the use of introducing Amendments which they had really no time to consider, and he would as soon have no Bill at all as have one that was cut about in that way, and practically valueless. Those who wished to see railway rates reduced had better make up their minds to have the Bill, and nothing but the Bill.

Mr. BRYCE said, he joined in the regret expressed by the hon. Member for Northamptonshire (Mr. Channing), that the House had not had more time to deal with the Bill. He should have been glad, and the Government would have been glad, if it had been possible to give a little longer time to the measure, but in their difficult position they had had to consider whether it would not be better to pass such a measure as it was possible to pass rather than allow the matter to stand over altogether for another year. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway had had considerable experience in these matters, and had formed a pretty sound estimate of the situation. He knew that looking for the Bill of next year was like looking for the snow of last winter. The bird they had in the hand now might be a small one, but it was better than the bird in the bush of next year. Still, it would not be to the benefit of the traders of the country that they should pass a measure of uncertain construction, and unless it wes cleared up in certain particulars by Amendments, a great deal of litigation would result. When the principal Amendments on the Paper had been added, the Bill would be found a very useful measure. It must be remembered that it was limited in its application, and would not deal with those rates that were already reduced by the Act of 1892. It, however, would give the Railway Commissioners the powers they required to enable them to reduce the rates, which had been increased since 1892. He did not think the Commissioners would go behind the Act of 1892 unless in very exceptional cases, which would be few in number. The Bill was founded on the Report of the Committee of last year, which spoke about increase of rates, and did not go beyond that. It was brought in by his predecessor to carry out the Report of the Committee of 1892, therefore he thought it would be difficult for the Hause to refuse now to adhere to the principle of that Report. The Amendment moved by the right hon. Member for the University of Dublin was one which did not suit everybody, but was accepted by a large number of representative traders. The Amendment before them was the same as one he had himself placed upon the Paper. He had, before giving notice of it, consulted with those who were in a position to give the best advice on the subject, and it was with the approval of the Chairman of the Mansion House Committee that he had decided to move. The arrangement made was only for the present year. The Companies and the traders had waived objection. Both sides had made concessions, and were agreed that the subject should be gone into fully in some future year. He trusted they would not be put to the trouble of a Division.

*MR. TOMLINSON said, he knew what was the opinion of the Chairman of the Mansion House Association. He only supported the Bill at all so far as holding that it was better than nothing at all. It was not the fact that they were satisfied with the measure, because they were dissatisfied with it; nor that they thought they had been dealt with fairly, because they considered that they had been dealt with very unfairly. He thought that such an important question as this should have received more attention at the hands of the Government, and not have been brought on at the extreme end of the Session. It was only because on the balance of advantages that they agreed to the passing of the Bill, considering it better to take what they could get at the present moment than leave the whole thing open.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 72; Noes 32.—(Division List, No. 229.)

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, he wished to move an Amendment to compel Companies to supply the public with information as to the standard rates of 1892, which were made the basis of rates by the Bill.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, at the end, add—

"(2) Under and subject to any Regulations which may be made by the Board of Trade, every Railway Company shall keep the books, schedules, or other papers specifying all the rates, charges, and conditions of transport in use upon such railway on the 31st day of December, 1892, open for inspection at its head office, and shall upon demand supply copies of or extracts from such books, schedules, and papers."—(*Sir A. Rollit.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

MR. D. PLUNKET said, he would move an Amendment the object of which was to provide that a trader who desired to challenge the reasonableness of an increase of rate made by a Railway Company

"Shall, before or within 14 days after filing his complaint, pay to the Railway Company such sum in respect of any rate or charge complained of as would have been payable by him to them had the rate or charge in force previous to the increase remained in force."

The clause went on to say—

"Any dispute as to the amount so payable shall be decided by the Registrar or in such other mode as the Court or the said *ex officio* member thereof may order, but such payment or decision shall be without prejudice to any order of the Court upon the complaint."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, after line 17, to insert—

"(4) Unless the Court shall otherwise order, a complainant to the Railway and Canal Commissioners under this section shall, before or within 14 days after filing his complaint, pay to the Railway Company such sum in respect of any rates complained of as would have been payable by him to them had the rates charged on the last day of December, 1892, remained in force; any dispute as to the amount so payable shall be decided by the Registrar, but such payment or decision shall be without prejudice to any order of the Court upon the complaint." —(*Mr. D. Plunket.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. CHANNING said, the principle of the Amendment was fair, and he hoped it would be accepted. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade how a case of this kind would be dealt with. There were, as they all knew, many special rates, and in the case of a rate duly entered on the books under the 14th section of the Act of 1873, would the trader be required to pay into Court more than the special rate or the full ordinary rate of 1892?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said, the wording of the Amendment would not do. Instead of the word "rates" the words "rates or charges" should be used, as in the rest of the Bill. Then the right hon. Gentleman proposed that the rate as it stood before the last day of December, 1892, should be paid. It was perfectly obvious that that would not apply to cases of future increases of rates, as the rates might have been lowered.

MR. DODD said, he would move an Amendment which would come earlier, to the effect that instead of the unfortunate trader having to pay the rate within the fixed time of 14 days, the Judge might at any time after the filing of the complaint order the payment of such sum as would have been payable had the rates charged at the end of 1892 remained in force. If this were not done the Companies having a bad case might defeat the case of the complainant on the technical ground that he had not paid within the prescribed 14 days the exact amount due to the Company. It would often be difficult to say what the 1892 rate was. Traders might not have sent goods in 1892, or there might be a rebate to which they were entitled which might or might not be allowed.

Amendments proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 1, to leave out from "(4)," to "any dispute," in line 6, and insert—

> "The Court, or the Judge who is the *ex officio* member thereof, may at any time after the filing of a complaint under this section order the complainant to pay to the Railway Company such sum in respect of any rates complained of as would have been payable by him to the Railway Company had the rates charged on the last day of December, 1892, remained in force."

Line 7, after "Registrar," insert—

> "or in such other mode as the Court or the said *ex officio* member thereof may order."—(*Mr. Dodd.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be inserted in the proposed Amendment."

*Sir A. ROLLIT said, there was no more debateable matter on the Paper except this. The Amendment could scarcely be disposed of to-night; therefore, he would suggest that it should be now withdrawn and taken on Report, so that the Bill could pass its present stage to-night.

*Mr. PLUNKET said, he would undertake on the part of the Railway Companies to accept the second part of the Amendment if the words "who is *ex officio* member thereof" were omitted.

Mr. BRYCE said, the Government would accept the second part of the Amendment if the first part were withdrawn.

Mr. DODD said, he would follow the course suggested.

Amendments to the proposed Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendments proposed to the proposed Amendment, after the word "rates," in lines 4 and 5, to insert the words "rates and charges."

Amendments agreed to.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress.

House resumed.

Mr. BRYCE: I would ask that the House should again resolve itself into Committee for the purpose of disposing of the remaining Amendments, which are not controversial, and which will only occupy us five minutes.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH: I must object to the proposal on the ground that it would set a most dangerous precedent. If the right hon. Gentleman will put the Bill down as the second Order on Monday it will be disposed of in half an hour.

Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 353.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. J. Morley.*)

Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Cork) said, the difficulty in connection with the question of the congested districts was not the want of land but the fact that the landlands would only part with it at a very extravagant price. He did not believe any substantial progress would be made in the direction of enlarging holdings or in the direction of migration unless compulsory powers were obtained. This Bill was the second measure introduced with a view to extend the powers of the Congested Districts Board, and yet it only touched the fringe of the whole question. There was plenty of land available for the purposes of the Board in the West of Ireland; but the landlords were complete masters of the situation, and they could name their own figures. Compulsory powers were therefore needed; and there would be nothing revolutionary in adding those powers to the Bill, as they were already exercised in Scotland under the Crofters Act; and in Ireland, to some extent, under the Labourers Acts; and as they would be exercised in England under the Parish Councils Act. Of course, he did not object to the present Bill. On the contrary, he thought it a step in the right direction, and that it would be useful as an inducement to some landlords to act reasonably towards the Congested Districts Board. But he hoped the Chief Secretary would be able to tell the House that between this and next Session he would consider the matter, and see whether he could not agree with the Leader of the Opposition, whose name was on the back of this Bill, on some moderate compulsory powers which would enable the Congested Districts Board to deal with the social difficulties in those districts.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he desired to point out that the cases which would be dealt with by the Bill were precisely those cases where the security of the State was very weak. The Bill proposed to release the landlord from his guarantee, and also to abolish the tenants' insurance fund. If the author of the Land Purchase Act of 1891 saw his way to make those concessions he did not see why any one should object; but he wished to point out that the element of security disappeared altogether from those very holdings where the security was always weak.

Colonel NOLAN said, the Congested Districts Board had an income of £46,000 a year, and found it difficult to get on with it. He was glad the Bill was going to pass; but if the new expenditure was going to fall on the income of the Board, he thought that income ought to be substantially increased.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, he thought it would be the fairest thing if the clerks to be appointed under the Congested Districts Board were appointed by open competition and not by nomination.

Mr. J. MORLEY said, he quite agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Louth. In the course of inquiries with regard to the Bill he had been surprised to find that in the Land Commission there were appointments to offices by nomination, a course which he thought had disappeared from the Public Service. He did not desire any application of that exploded principle in the office of the Congested Districts Board; and he hoped it would also disappear from the Land Commission. In answer to the hon. Member for South Tyrone, he would say that the security to the taxpayers was not affected or impaired in any way. In an ordinary case they had only the security of an individual landlord and an individual tenant; and surely the hon. Gentleman would not deny that the guarantee of the Congested Districts Board with an assured income was better? The Congested Districts Board was not likely to go so close to the wind as to endanger the security of the liabilities which the Bill could impose on them.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (interposing) said, that his point was that if anything was drawn from the income of the Board to meet those liabilities, it must operate against the other work of the Board, and thus bring further claims on the taxpayers.

Mr. J. MORLEY said, that was quite true; but the security was not affected or impaired in any way, and the proposal in the Bill had the approval of the founder of the Congested Districts Board. In answer to his hon. Friend the Member for Cork, he agreed that the fact that consideration of public policy had justified the introduction of compulsory powers in the Crofters Act; the Parish Councils Act and the Irish Labourers' Acts certainly took away anything violent or revolutionary in the suggestion of his hon. Friend, that the Congested Districts Board should have compulsory powers to acquire land. But the question of compulsory powers was always attended with considerable controversy, and it would not be possible to pass a measure containing those powers this Session. He was now considering the matter, but he could not say at that moment whether he would be able to bring in a Bill dealing with it as early as next Session.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 342.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 9th August.*]

Committee deferred till Monday next.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, a difficulty had arisen in regard to the question of age under Clause 2, and he wished to ask whether, in view of the opposition of the hon. Member for Preston to any amendment of the Bill, the Government intended to persevere with the measure ?

MR. TOMLINSON said, he did not object to any amendment of the Bill that could be shown to be necessary in order to make it a purely Consolidation Bill. But he objected to any and every Amendment that would make it anything but a Consolidation Bill.

MR. CONYBEARE said, his Amendment to Clause 2 would come under the destructive tendencies of the hon. Member ; but, all the same, he would endeavour to push that Amendment.

SIR J. RIGBY said, that this was purely a Consolidation Bill, and it would be a breach of faith towards the House if they were to attempt to carry any such Amendment as that which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Camborne. The frame of the Bill did not alter the law. They had no authority to do so. They found there were two Bills to be amalgamated, and they amalgamated them without altering the law by one jot or tittle.

ELEMENTAY EDUCATION BILL. (No. 302.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Second Reading [11th July].

Objection being taken,

*MR. ACLAND said, that as the principle of the Bill had been accepted by the House generally, and as he had offered to accept Amendments in Committee, he hoped hon. Gentlemen opposite would allow the Second Reading to be taken. He had not heard of any objections in principle to the Bill.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH : I object to the Bill in principle.

MR. ACLAND : Then, if the right hon. Gentleman objects in principle, I will ask to have the Order discharged and the Bill withdrawn.

Order discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS (BETTERMENT).

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House a Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Town Improvements (Betterment), with the Proceedings of the Committee and Minutes of Evidence ; and that the Clerk do carry the same.—(*Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.*)

MARKING OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to request that their Lordships will be pleased to communicate to this House a Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Marking of Foreign and Colonial Produce, with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence ; and that the Clerk do carry the same.—(*Mr. H. Gardner.*)

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL [*Lords*].

Read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to to be printed. [Bill 354.]

PRIZE COURTS BILL [*Lords*]. (No. 311.)

Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

CONCILIATION (TRADE DISPUTES) BILL. (No. 125.)

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [23rd April] read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL. (No. 336.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment ; read the third time, and passed.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 294.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

COPYHOLD CONSOLIDATION BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 344.)

Read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

CONVENTION OF ROYAL BURGHS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 339.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

POLICE BURGHS (SCOTLAND) HARBOURS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Graham Murray, Bill to enable Police Burghs in Scotland to acquire Harbours existing within their boundaries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Graham Murray and Captain Hope.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 355.]

ARMY.

Copy presented,—of General Annual Return of the British Army for 1893, with Abstracts [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Board of Visitors for 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, SANDHURST).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Board of Visitors for 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NITRO-GLYCERINE FACTORY, WALTHAM ABBEY.

Copy presented,—of Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the Explosion, on the 7th May, 1894, at the Nitro-Glycerine Factory, Waltham Abbey [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BANKING, RAILWAY, AND SHIPPING STATISTICS (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Report for the half-year ended 30th June, 1894 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CITY OF LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES.

Return ordered, "showing the accounts of receipts and expenditure rendered to the Charity Commissioners by the Trustees of the City of London Parochial Charities since the creation of that body."—(*Mr. Howell.*)

CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS (BRADFORD).

Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an inquiry held in every parish wholly or partly within the County Borough of Bradford into Endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1891, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that County Borough or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those Endowments of the Commissioners for Inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing in the case of each such parish whether any, and, if any, what such Endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the parish; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Reports."—(*Mr. Francis Stevenson.*)

CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS (WEST RIDING OF THE COUNTY OF YORK.)

Return ordered, "comprising (1) the Reports made to the Charity Commissioners, in the result of an inquiry held in every parish wholly or partly within the Administrative County of the West Riding of York into Endowments, subject to the provisions of the Charitable Trusts Acts, 1853 to 1891, and appropriated in whole or in part for the benefit of that County or of any part thereof, together with the Reports on those Endownments of the Commissioners for Inquiring concerning Charities, 1818 to 1837; (2) a Digest showing, in the case of each such parish, whether any, and, if any, what such Endowments are recorded in the books of the Charity Commissioners in the parish; and (3) an Index, alphabetically arranged, of names and places mentioned in the Reports."—(*Mr. Francis Stevenson.*)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 13th August 1894.

Several Lords—took the Oath.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE MARQUESS OF **SALISBURY** moved,

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of the Report from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, dated March 27, 1886; together with the Names of the Lords of the Committee making the said Report, and of witnesses examined and of parties heard by counsel before them."

He said: My Lords, I believe there is no objection to this Motion. By the courtesy of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack I have been able to fix upon the precise date of the Judgment I have asked for.

Motion agreed to.

CROWN LANDS BILL.—(No. 199.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE **FIRST LORD** OF THE **TREASURY** AND **LORD PRESIDENT** OF THE **COUNCIL** (The Earl of ROSEBERY): This is a Bill, my Lords, which practically explains itself. It is only to give certain detailed facilities to the Commissioners of Woods, Forests, and Mines, founded on the recommendations of the Committee of the House of Commons on Crown Revenues of 1890. This Bill has itself been sifted by a Committee of that House of 1894. I shall be happy to answer any question about it, but I do not think it necessary to go into the details of the scheme.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

NEW INLAND REVENUE AFFIDAVITS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

*THE DUKE OF **RUTLAND** asked the Lord President of the Council whether copies of the new Inland Revenue affidavits, with the proposed schedules, would be laid on the Table of the House? He said that, in consequence of the new and onerous obligations laid upon executors by the new Finance Act, he thought it desirable that publicity should be given to the Interrogatories prepared for them by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue.

THE EARL OF **ROSEBERY**: I shall be quite prepared to lay them on the Table if the noble Duke will move for them.

TENANTS ARBITRATION (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 203.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*EARL **SPENCER**, in moving the Second Reading, said: My Lords, not unfrequently I have had to address your Lordships on the difficult subject of Irish land. I know that it is not easy to anyone in this House to discuss the question, more particularly to any one of the Party to which I have the honour to belong. In approaching this subject, I desire to avoid anything which would lead to bitterness or ill-feeling. I feel that the Bill which I have to introduce is one which heals rather than inflicts wounds, and therefore I wish to approach the subject which I have in hand in a spirit of conciliation. No one who has been in this House, particularly those who have had to take part in discussions on the Irish Land Question, can avoid being struck with this—that we cannot approach this subject with any hope of doing justice to it if we start from the standpoint of English or Scotch land legislation. The Land Code in Ireland is entirely different from that which prevails in those parts of the United Kingdom. No doubt over 30 years ago an attempt was made to legislate for Ireland in the same way as England has been legislated for, and to extend the principle of contract in Ireland which has been, on the whole, so successful in England and Scotland.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

But all the great attempts which have been made to deal with this question since 1870 have followed a different course. Legislation has been framed—and there has been a necessity for it—on the customs and laws which prevailed in Ireland. There is another point of difference to which I must refer, and that is that the industry of agriculture in Ireland has for its surroundings quite a different state of things from that which prevails in the Sister Country. Unfortunately, there has been for many years past in Ireland a feeling of want of confidence on the part of the people in the laws which regulate that country; and too often the consequence has been that, when unfortunate differences have prevailed between landlord and tenant, and when the landlord has had to exercise his legal rights, agrarian disturbance has arisen of a very serious kind. I deplore that state of things. I wish that we could legislate for Ireland as we have legislated in the past for England and Scotland. I regret that we are obliged to make this exception for various reasons—on account of differences in the original law, differences in customs, and differences which exist in the social and political condition of Ireland. But while I regret that, I feel that we have been right in the mode in which we have treated this subject, and it is therefore for this reason that I must appeal to your Lordships most earnestly to look at this question not from the English or Scotch point of view, but from the Irish point of view, in order to deal with the difficulties which exist in Ireland. The legislation for Ireland has been of two kinds. We have had legislation of a permanent character, and we have also had legislation of a temporary character. Legislation of a permanent character is to be found in the Land Acts of 1870, 1881, and 1887; and in the Purchase Acts of 1885 and 1891. Legislation of a temporary kind has been found in the Arrears Act of 1882, in certain clauses of the Act of 1887, giving power to revise judicial rents; and notably in a section of the Act of 1891, to which I shall have presently to refer. At the outset I wish to say this with regard to the landlords of Ireland. I am not one of those who condemn the whole body of Irish landlords. On the contrary, I believe there is a considerable number of landlords in Ireland who are, and have been, as anxious to be just in their dealings with their tenants as have landlords on this side of the Irish Channel. But, unfortunately, there have been other landlords who, either from necessity or unwillingness, have not followed that course. Some of them may have been driven into this course by the poverty of their position, by the necessity of extracting the last farthing from their tenants. But others have been actuated by a different spirit, have been unwilling to acknowledge any grievance on the part of their tenants, and have turned a deaf ear to the advice given to them by their friends and neighbours. To those persons are due, I am afraid, the exceptional measures of legislation which have been passed, and which have pressed on all landlords in Ireland, whether good or bad. This Bill which I have to introduce necessarily comes under the category of temporary measures. It is one of those temporary measures which have been brought in owing to some sudden emergency caused either by an unusually bad season, or by some social or political agitation in the country. It is necessary to establish the fact that such an emergency exists before you can justify the introduction of a measure of a temporary character; and I shall endeavour at once to show that there is an emergency of this kind at present. Let us look at Ireland with regard to evictions. We find that there is a very large body of evicted tenants in various parts of the country. The number may be roundly stated at 4,000. These tenants are either scattered about on different estates and in different parts of the country, or are collected in groups, owing to the exceptional measures which have been taken on one estate or another. Now what is the condition of these men? Their condition is miserable in the extreme. They are not only very poor, but they have practically no homes. The live either in the houses of their friends, near to their own farms, or they live in miserable huts which have been erected for them. Now, my Lords, the first question we have to ask is: Have these tenants a grievance, and, if so, ought that grievance to be remedied? I say distinctly that they have a grievance. Some of the tenants are men who left their farms before the Act of 1881, which established a tribunal for the fixing of fair rents. Others left their farms before the Act of 1887, which included leaseholders within the operation of the Land Acts. Others there are who left their farms owing to serious agitation in the country. Some left their farms after the no-rent agitation, and others left after the starting of the Plan of Campaign, to which I shall presently refer. It is fair to point out that many of these men would probably have been able to battle against the difficulties which surrounded them had the enactments which were carried subsequently to their eviction been in force at the time. Naturally when this is the case there is very serious discontent owing to their grievances against the laws of their country. In my opinion it is right to sift these questions and these cases by an authoritative tribunal. I believe that while you have these large bodies of men in different parts of the country, full of discontent and grievances, you have a serious danger to the peace of the country. Let me examine this latter part of my proposition a little more fully. We believe that the existence of these large bodies of men in every part of the country, in sight of their former farms, and often in districts which are extremely liable to disaffection, with, in some cases, the land overgrown with weeds and the houses and buildings in ruins and going to decay, and in other cases with new tenants occupying the land of the old ones—occupying it, no doubt, with a perfectly legal title, but at the same time occupying it, as it must be borne in mind, in the teeth of the feelings of those who have been turned out, and who are living around them—we believe that that state of affairs is dangerous to the peace of the country. We have often heard in this House of particular districts in Ireland where there have been outrages, boycotting, and disturbances. We have heard of these in Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Tipperary, and a very large number of the evicted tenants remain in those counties. In those four counties, roughly speaking, there are over 900 tenants who had been evicted from their farms. In passing, I would say that when I referred roughly to 4,000 tenants who had been evicted, I did not refer to all the tenants who have been evicted throughout the country, many of whom have since been restored to the farms from which they were evicted. I only refer to those who are not now occupying land of their own in the country. For the purposes of this Bill we take the number from May 1, 1879—the date mentioned in Clause 13 of the Act of 1891, passed by the late Government. Well, I maintain that this number of evicted tenants, with their grievances, which they feel so strongly, are so many mines of powder in various parts of the country, and that any spark of discontent may cause an explosion at any time. This is not a question which must be dealt with by a Liberal Government particularly ; it is a question which, I maintain, demands, and will demand, the attention of any Government which may be in power. I believe if the noble Marquess opposite succeeded to power to-morrow he would have to face this difficulty and to try to put an end to the trouble connected with these evicted farms. I referred just now to the Plan of Campaign, and though I do not wish to enter at length or in great detail into that very thorny controversy, I feel it right to refer to it while dealing with the condition of the evicted tenants. I have never concealed the fact that I disapproved entirely of the Plan of Campaign. I have stated that in this House and elsewhere. What I wish to say now is that while no doubt the Plan of Campaign has increased the number of tenants who are evicted in Ireland, the Plan of Campaign is not the sole reason for introducing this Bill. And I am sure it will not be argued that because of the existence of the Plan of Campaign, which has been most unfortunate in its results, and in some cases disastrous, we are not entitled to deal with this question. I will claim the support of Her Majesty's Opposition in favour of the proposition that it is essential this question should be dealt with. I have referred already to the 13th section of the Act of 1891, and I will now deal with it more in detail. That section was accepted by the Leader of the Conservative Party in another place, who was then Chief Secretary for Ireland. It was accepted by Mr. Balfour, and that is a matter of considerable importance. What did that section admit? It was not compulsory. I begin by at once admitting that. That section enabled certain tenants who had lost their rights to obtain all the privileges which they would have obtained had they been existing tenants under the Purchase Act of 1891.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: With the consent of the landlord.

EARL SPENCER: No doubt with the consent of the landlord. I quite agree in what the noble Marquess said. It was a privilege conferred upon tenants who had been evicted and were not within the scope of the Bill and tenants who had been evicted probably in consequence of the Plan of Campaign. I think that is a matter of considerable importance, and I must dwell further on this clause. Unfortunately, the 13th clause of the Act of 1891 had very little effect in Ireland. Very few cases were dealt with. I find there were only 189 applications on 19 estates up to the 31st of March this year; 138 cases on 12 estates were settled; 42 cases were then outstanding. I have no information of what has happened to them; nine cases were refused. I think that will show that the clause was not successful, and that it did not operate as it was intended. Why has it failed? Perhaps it is a rash thing to point out where a measure of this sort has failed, but I will venture to give two or three reasons. First, its operation was limited to a short time—six months. Then the parties who were to come under the Bill hesitated to come forward, because they considered it would be an act of weakness on their part to do so. I should like here to refer to a very notable remark made by the Chief Secretary of that day. I am only speaking now, my Lords, about the necessity of a settlement, not as to compulsion in this matter. Mr. Balfour said—

> "For my part, if I were an Irish landlord, even if it were not to my own pecuniary interest, I should desire to have peace in that part of that country in which my property was situated, and that these men should on fair, equitable, and even generous terms be restored to their homes."

I cannot conceive a wiser or more equitable sentiment than is contained in those words. Another distinguished person, who is not a supporter of Her Majesty's Government, Mr. Courtney, also said recently it was a matter of urgent necessity that this crowd of evicted tenants, landless and workless, should be restored. He said—

> "I do not commit myself for one moment to the particular method which is adopted in the Bill, but that it is desirable, urgent, and necessary to deal in some way with the crowd of evicted tenants who are found in a landless and workless condition near the places where they once worked as tenants is, to my mind, an abiding conviction."

Now, my Lords, I venture to think that the case is established that it is indispensable for peace and for law and order in Ireland that a settlement should be arrived at on this question. I will now turn to the Bill itself, and endeavour, as shortly as I can, to explain its provisions to your Lordships. The first thing it does is to establish a body of Arbitrators to deal with the subject. The Arbitrators have been named in the Bill, and, as far as I know, very little exception has been taken to them, to their impartiality, their ability, or their experience. The noble Marquess shakes his head, and although what I say will not carry weight with him, I am bound to give my opinion, knowing all three gentlemen, that no more impartial, able, and experienced men could be found than those named in the Bill to carry out their work. It has been over and over again said, Why do you appoint a fresh body; why do you not leave the settlement of these disputes to the Land Commission? There are two reasons: First of all, the Land Commission has an enormous mass of business to get through, and it is most undesirable to add to that business. In the next place, it is not desirable that the Land Commissioners, with all their difficult duties in connection with landlords and tenants in different parts of the country, should be mixed up in matters which may raise acute and difficult questions. These are the reasons why Her Majesty's Government thought it desirable to appoint special Commissioners for this task of conciliation. The Arbitrators are appointed for two years. Any tenant of a holding, agricultural or pastoral, or partly agricultural and partly pastoral, may make an appeal to the Arbitrators to consider his case for reinstatement to his holding. The Arbitrators may then go into the matter, and make a Provisional Order in the case; they may dismiss the case, or they may decide in favour of reinstating the tenant subject to conditions.

On the Provisional Order being made, they send it to the landlord, and if the landlord assents, this Order is made absolute, with such conditions as the Arbitrators may decide. If, on the other hand, the landlord objects, the Arbitrators are bound to hear, either in public or private, his objection, and then make their decision. This, my Lords, is the only part of the Bill in which compulsion is introduced. The landlord may require the tenant to purchase his holding, and the purchase-money has to be settled either by the Land Commissioners or the Arbitrators, and if the tenant refuses to buy the holding his claim for reinstatement ceases. The rent of the holding shall be the former rent until a new rent is fixed. Either the Land Commissioners, or, if the landlord and tenant so desire, the Arbitrators themselves may fix a new rent. To explain the necessity of this provision, I may say, first of all, that there may be tenants who, in the opinion of the Arbitrators, should be reinstated, but who held their farms before the Act of 1881, and there may be others who held their farms before the Act of 1887. In these cases it is right that a fair rent should be fixed. In the case, again, where the farm has been derelict for a considerable time, the former tenant should not be compelled to give the same rent as before. And in another case it is right that a fair rent should be fixed—namely, where the landlord has, during his own tenure of the holding, laid out a large sum of money upon it. With regard to the provision as to purchase, that

> "a guarantee deposit shall not be retained out of the Guaranteed Land Stock issued for the advance of the purchase-money,"

it may be said that the Government are diminishing the Guarantee Fund on which this country depends, and running considerable risk to this country in the event of default on the part of the tenants. Now it is satisfactory, at all events with regard to past purchases, to notice that out of £10,000,000 that have been advanced since 1885 for the purchase of holdings, only about £2,000 has been taken from the Guarantee Deposit Fund, and I need hardly say that if the same proportion prevails with regard to these farms the amount will reach a very small sum indeed. Coming to the case where the Arbitrators find that a new tenant is in occupation of the holding, the same process is gone through which I have already described, and if the new tenant objects the Arbitrators shall not make an order for reinstatement. So far as we can tell, the provision in this clause applies to about 1,500 of the evicted tenants. If the Arbitrators think it desirable, they may allow the landlord two years' arrears of rent or a part thereof, and they may, out of the funds at their disposal, pay one half of the sum. In case the farmhouse or buildings are in a state of dilapidation, a sum not exceeding £50 may be paid to the incoming tenant for repairing them. The third sub-section of the fourth clause contains an important provision—namely, that where a new tenant objects to an order for reinstatement—

> "The Arbitrators may, upon all claims on the holding being renounced by the former tenant, award to him, out of the moneys at their disposal for the purposes of this Act, such sums as they deem reasonable, not exceeding the sums which, in their opinion, might have been payable out of the said funds in respect of the said holding if the order for reinstatement had been made."

This is in order to facilitate the process of settlement, because it would be an immense boon to the tenant and would probably enable him to settle on some other farm, and this would, in our opinion, be a great step towards a solution of the difficulty. Then there is a clause encouraging voluntary agreements between landlords and tenants. In those cases the Arbitrators may award such compensation and take all the steps which would have been taken had a decision been made under their arbitration. The sum at the disposal of the Arbitrators will be £250,000, charged on the Irish Church Temporalities Fund. Notwithstanding the enormous number of calls there have been on this fund, I am assured that there will not be the slightest difficulty in the money being provided out of the fund. But there is another point. Will this sum be sufficient for the purpose? As far as I can make out, it will exceed considerably what will be necessary to carry out the provisions of the measure. If every landlord were to receive from the Commissioners one year's arrears for tenants taking the benefit of the Act, that would amount to about £142,000. I need hardly point out that nothing like that number will come under the operation of the Bill, and therefore, as far as that part of the measure goes, there will be ample money at the disposal of the Arbitrators. The balance, after dealing with the arrears, will, in the opinion of the Government, suffice to meet all other requirements of the Act. Lastly, there is a provision with regard to migration, the Land Commissioners being empowered, on the recommendation of the Arbitrators, to buy land to sell to tenants. My Lords, having now dealt with the Bill, I will come to these parts about which the greatest amount of contention exists—I mean the compulsory provisions. Though there may be objections to other parts of the Bill, that is the crucial difference between Her Majesty's Government and the Opposition in this matter. I will say at once that in the opinion of the Government compulsion will be the surest way of effecting a settlement. Where is it that the difficulty exists? Surely it is in those landlords who are unwilling or unable to meet their former tenants. I would quote here again Mr. Courtney, who has taken such a leading part in the discussions on this Bill, and I rely entirely on the arguments he used. He said—

> "I confess it is difficult to take up the position of affirming that it is desirable, expedient, and reasonable that the credit of the State should be used and the procedure of the Courts extended and made more elaborate in order to bring back tenants to their holdings, and that at the same time it is reasonable to allow an unreasonable landlord to object. The thing in itself is a thing we desire as a matter of Imperial policy. You may get half-a-dozen individuals —certainly not expressing the views of the majority of the Irish landlords—unreasonably preventing what you say is a reasonable solution, and you will not allow the interference of the State to prevent these plague spots being removed."

That is the view which Her Majesty's Government take. We believe that without compulsion these plague spots will not be removed. I do not like to speak of my own personal experience in this matter, but I cannot help referring to the experience which I had in Ireland, and which bears on this subject. The first time I went to Ireland we had a state of murderous agitation and combination in Westmeath. The second time I went to Ireland I found a terrible agrarian convulsion pervading the whole country. We met the difficulty as we could, but I remember full well this—and I think it will be the experience of others who have had to deal with the subject—that very often the most successful way of dealing with a disturbed district was to obtain a settlement of the agrarian difficulty between landlord and tenant. Time after time was I able to do this, and I know that whenever a settlement in any part of the country was effected we were able at once to remove the police and the military, without whom before that settlement life was not safe in the district. I quote this experience of mine in support of the weighty words which were used by Mr. Courtney. It is these plague spots in different parts of the island which are the real and serious danger, and I fear that unless these are dealt with no measure will prove satisfactory or of much effect. At the same time, I will say this: that another method might relieve to a great extent the tension in Ireland—I mean voluntary settlements. But the one condition on which a voluntary measure can be successful is this: that we must have some guarantee that both sides to this bitter struggle are ready to act loyally in the matter. I regret to think that as far as we have gone—although there have been several notable instances of leading men who are desirous of a settlement—we have not had any declaration from leading landlords in Ireland that would encourage us to adopt a voluntary measure. On the other hand, the Irish Members have expressed a willingness to meet the other side half-way, if they could be assured that the landlords would act loyally in this matter. I shall not say more on this point. Now, my Lords, I will refer to another matter which I have seen used as an argument why your Lordships should not accept this measure—namely, the conduct of the Government in another place. I shall not go at length into that subject. I only wish to say that I cannot for a moment think that your Lordships would adopt any argument of that sort. Criticisms may be made on that subject in this House, and if they are my noble Friends will be able to defend the action of the Government, but I cannot conceive how this will be an argument for your Lordships not dealing with the subject when your Lordships have it entirely in your own hands—though I should deprecate it—to remodel the Bill. I have only a few words more to say, but they are words of earnest entreaty. You have too often in the past curtailed provisions in Irish Bills which have come from another place, and have been supported by the majority of the Irish people. You have too often rejected measures which the majority of the Irish nation considered of vital interest to their country. On the other hand, you have passed measures which are hateful to them. I do not for a moment say that your Lordships had not an absolute right to follow out your own opinions, but a very deplorable and unfortunate state of things occurs from this opposition of your Lordships to the opinion of the country as made known through the majority of the Irish Members elsewhere. You have now another important Irish measure before you. You have another opportunity of making a concession to Irish opinion, and to settle a bitter quarrel. This opportunity may not come again, or it may not come under such auspicious circumstances. At this moment Ireland is in a state of quietude such as she has not enjoyed for 20 years. Too often in this controversy the arguments opposed to Irish measures have run in what I may call a vicious circle. If Ireland is quiet you are told there is no need for legislation; if Ireland is disturbed you are told you must wait till she becomes quiet before introducing healing measures. I repudiate that doctrine. I desire your Lordships to seize this opportunity of trying to settle this serious and great difficulty. I cannot forget a memorable occasion 14 years ago when the Liberal Government proposed a measure which they deemed necessary to the peace of Ireland—I refer to the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. Your Lordships rejected that measure. The terrible land agitation which then had begun was not abated, but increased, and culminated in one of the worst outbreaks of crime ever known in that country. I do not say that similar events will follow the rejection of our present proposal; God forbid! The condition of Ireland is better; the temper and feeling of the Irish people is better; but you will exasperate the feelings of a large body of men who up to the present time have looked to Parliament to meet their grievances, and if your Lordships reject this measure they will know that they have no hope, at all events from this House. I entreat your Lordships not to refuse the demands of the Irish people. I do not say that the Irish Government will not be able to meet the difficulties which may arise, but I do say that their difficulties will be enormously increased. This proposal is made in the interests of law and order, and I feel very strongly that a most serious responsibility will rest with this House if they reject the measure, the Second Reading of which I have the honour of proposing to your Lordships.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl Spencer.*)

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved that the Bill be read a second time that day three months. He said no one could rise to follow the noble Earl in a Debate in the House without paying a tribute to the high tone of his speech and his evident desire to do what in his heart he believed to be fair and equitable. They would all agree that it was incumbent on them to see whether this controversy could not be settled on a fair and equitable basis, but when they came to discuss what was fair and equitable a very wide divergence of opinion might be found to exist. He would say, however, that if all the speeches on this subject had been made in the same conciliatory tone as that of the noble Earl, he believed the two sides would not have been now so far apart as he was afraid they were. What were the pleas advanced for this Bill by the noble Earl? He told them that a great emergency existed in Ireland—that there was a sore and a grievance existing, and that if the present state of matters continued it would in all probability be the source of grave difficulty and danger to the Administration. That was a plea to which noble Lords on that side of the House would not be likely to turn a deaf ear; but they considered that if any attempt was to be made to deal with this matter it must be done upon right lines and with due and fair consideration to the private rights of others. They thought this Bill was not on lines which ought to be accepted, and there was too much evidence that even if it were to be accepted it would not settle the controversy. The noble Earl dwelt at some length upon the difference between the conditions of the land problem in Ireland, and in England and Scotland, and had cited some of the provisions of the Acts of 1870, 1881, and 1891. But in all those cases the general assumption underlying the legislation was that it dealt with two parties who had rights. Did the noble Earl believe that all those who would be affected by this Bill had rights which could be defined and determined in the same way? Then the noble Earl appealed to the policy embodied in the 13th section of the Purchase Act of 1891, but it was only by a stretch of imagination that they could justify the argument that because a certain body of persons had agreed to accept a certain line of policy if worked voluntarily, therefore they were equally bound to accept it if it was to be imposed without the consent of both the parties concerned. What did that clause really do? It enabled two persons to enter into a bargain, and if the bargain was approved by the appointed agents of the State, the State would assist them and ratify the bargain, provided that the interests of the State were duly safeguarded. But in the present Bill there was no such supposition of two persons to the bargain, but the bargain, whatever it was, was to be imposed on two persons, neither of whom, perhaps, might be willing to accept it. It might be said that there was not sufficient time for the 13th section of the Act of 1891 to work. If that ground was taken, why could not the Government re-enact the section and give it sufficient time to effect the purpose in view? The Government should not destroy all possibility of a real settlement being effected by standing over the parties concerned with a big stick and saying, "Unless you agree you shall be forced to do so." The broad fact remained, and could not be denied, that the Bill placed those men who had resisted and broken the law in many respects in a better position than those who had not done so, but had obeyed the law. No appeals to sentiment nor to considerations of any other kind would remove this great defect in the proposal of the Government. He did not profess to be an authority on all the conditions attaching to ownership of Irish land, but his opinion was that if ever a really equitable settlement was to be arrived at in this matter it must be made more or less by agreement, not only among politicians on different sides or political Parties, but between those whose private interests and rights were affected on one side and the other. One of the complaints of the Opposition was that in this matter the Government had all along thrown the whole weight of their influence on one side, and from first to last they had been the eager advocates of compulsion. But this had not always been the case. They entertained a prejudice against having their former declarations quoted against them, and he did not intend to go deeply into that fertile subject of controversy; but there was a time when Members of the Government evidently felt that all the right was not on the side of the tenant and all the wrong on the side of the landlord. On the 7th of January, 1886, the present Chief Secretary for Ireland used these words—

> "The late Government to their great honour passed an Act to prevent landlords confiscating the property of their tenants. That was a noble exploit. I do not think we shall be able to deal satisfactorily with Ireland until we have passed some legislation to prevent tenants from confiscating the property of their landlords."

What had Mr. Morley done since then to prevent tenants from confiscating the property of the landlords? There had been visits to Tipperary. He would not contradict what had been said by the noble Earl in moving the Second Reading, that he had heartily condemned the Plan of Campaign, and he did not say that Mr. Morley had not condemned the Plan of Campaign, but he thought he had erred lamentably on the side of weakness when he spoke of it. Members of the Government, when in Opposition, went about making promises to the tenants in Ireland. After the present Government was formed, Mr. Morley announced in ominous tones, that in this matter he "meant business." Then followed the appointment of Mr. Justice Mathews' Commission. After that Commission had reported, all the Members of the Government in the other House voted for a Bill introduced by one of the Irish Members containing provisions for the absolute reinstatement of every evicted tenant, no matter whether his holding had been let or not. It was impossible to fail to see that these proceedings of the Government had raised hopes in the minds of the tenants, which the Government were now finding it very difficult to satisfy. He frankly admitted the attractive character of the appeal of the noble Earl to let bygones be bygones, and were he an Irish landlord he would voluntarily yield much for the sake of peace; he would desire honestly to make peace, and he would welcome any voluntary course which would bring about a fair and real settlement, but he would resist by every legal means being compelled to make peace on the compulsory terms of the Bill. It seemed to him that there could be no hope of permanent peace secured by putting one side absolutely under the heel of the other, and giving that other a sense of triumph. He had no desire to be vindictive, but he asked the House and the Government to consider what were the special lessons which they would teach the people of Ireland if this Bill was passed. They would teach them that their special favour, their special reward and privileges, were reserved for those who had combined to rebel against the law, and who had promised, in no indistinct terms, to do it again. So far as he was concerned, the chief obstacle in the way of the Bill was its element of compulsion, but it should not be left out of sight that there were other objections to it. He could not fail to see the effect it would probably have on the new tenants, whose position would be made much worse than it was at present. Not only would the Bill not bring about a permanent settlement; there was only too much reason to apprehend that it would not bring about even a truce, if any confidence was to be placed in some of the declarations that had been recently made. But, in addition to this, grave objections might be taken against the machinery of the Bill, even if the element of compulsion was removed. The noble Earl had quoted the number of persons who were likely to apply under the Bill, and had stated the number as 4,000. It was difficult to know exactly what was the intention of Her Majesty's Government in the matter. Surely there had been changes in their policy to which the noble Earl had not referred in his speech. They had been accustomed to speak of the Bill as an Evicted Tenants' Bill, and understood that the Mathew Commission was appointed to inquire into the number of evicted tenants. He appealed to the terms of Mr. Morley's letter to Mr. Justin M'Carthy, announcing the decision to appoint the Commission. Mr. Morley wrote—

> "We intend that the area of the inquiry shall principally cover estates within the scope of Section 13 of the Act of 1891, where disputes still exist between landlords and evicted tenants, but excluding all cases where the evicted tenants have left the country."

On the Second Reading of the Bill in another place Mr. Morley indicated that there would be about 5,900 persons likely to claim its benefits, of whom 4,000 would claim with success. Those figures were challenged at the time. He repeated that it was difficult to know what the Government meant as to the number of evicted tenants to be dealt with. It would appear, from the statements made by Mr. Morley, as reported in *The Times* of the 9th of August, that there might be more than 32,000 persons who would claim under the Bill. He had no wish to mislead the House nor to detain it by quoting a somewhat long conversation. Mr. Bartley on that occasion said

> "there was nothing to prevent those 32,000 evicted tenants from claiming under the Bill;"

and Mr. Morley answered—

> "I think not; but each case will be determined upon its merits."

*EARL SPENCER said, he had referred to a large number of tenants who had been evicted up to a certain time, and there might have been 32,000. But almost the whole of these had since then been restored to their holdings, and the 4,000 represented those who had neither been restored nor were living on land of their own, and who would, therefore, come within the scope of the Bill.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that hardly disposed of the whole case, though, of course, the noble Earl knew the intentions of the Government and the probable scope of the Bill much better than himself. In reply to a question Mr. Morley stated that from 1881 to 1887 there had been 24,400 evictions, and from 1887 to 1894 8,975 evictions; making a total of over 33,000. It was quite true, as stated, that some of those persons had been reinstated and others had gone into other callings, and that of the 5,900 evicted tenants expected to claim only 4,000 might be expected to claim successfully. But, after all, the exact number of those concerned in the operation of this Bill was a matter of small importance as compared with the dangerous change of policy of Her Majesty's Government in connection with their measure. It now applied not only to cases where the eviction had been for non-payment of rent, but to all tenants whose tenancies had determined subsequently to the 1st of May, 1879. It applied to tenants whose tenancy had determined without any eviction—*e.g.*, where the landlord had purchased the tenancy from the tenant at a Sheriff's sale or by private sale; where the tenants had voluntarily surrendered the holding with or without compensation; where the tenant was evicted for breach of one of the statutory conditions attached to tenancies where a fair rent had been fixed by the Act of 1881; and it would also include tenants evicted by order of the Judge of the High Court—by the Lord Chancellor, for example—where the owner was a minor or lunatic; or by Mr. Justice Monroe, the Land Judge. In those cases the Judge must have considered all the circumstances before ordering proceedings, and presumably no injustice was done. Why should all these persons be entitled to demand to be reinstated? Why should they be restored to their holdings when nothing was done for men who had quitted their farms in similar circumstances in England? The policy of this Bill and the lessons taught by it could not be confined to Ireland. This was not merely an Irish question, but it would act and react upon the government of this country. It must exert a powerful influence on the methods of government in the country, and therefore he viewed it as one of the gravest and most dangerous steps that Parliament had ever been asked to take. If the Bill were confined to the cases of those who had suffered some undeserved misfortune, and who had been evicted in circumstances over which they had no control, it would appeal to the sympathy of almost every Member of their Lordships' House. For himself he should be ready to facilitate the return to their holdings of men who had lost them in consequence of some technicality in the law, if that could be done with fairness to others. But it was altogether a different thing when they were asked to restore wholesale to their holdings men who had joined together to resist the payment of their just obligations which they boasted they could in many cases have discharged if they had chosen. Partnership in these matters was urged, but by enacting a measure for the compulsory reinstatement of tenants they would be arraying all the forces of the Government against the very partner in Irish land affairs who had fulfilled his share of the contract. They would, in addition, be justifying and rewarding the authors of the Plan of Campaign. They would be giving not only State reconsideration, but State reward to men who had broken the law, who had rebelled against authority, and who had not acknowledged that they were wrong in so doing. He felt inclined to ask whether the Government had no misgivings of teaching such lessons? To pass this Bill would be teaching that rebellion against the law was one of the surest roads to favour and reward at the public expense. To reinstate compulsorily men who had broken their contracts would be to establish a precedent fatal to the future tranquillity of Ireland, and to create far more danger than could be compensated by any present gain which possibly might be purchased by such a measure. Another consideration was this: both Parties in the State were committed to large schemes of purchase, and by-and-by the State would probably have become the largest landlord in Ireland. What would be the effect then of this teaching they were now inculcating? The noble Lord opposite used as an argument the fact that there was to be a body of high-minded men appointed as Arbitrators, and had urged that it would be wise to trust this tribunal as one of the safeguards of the Bill. But even supposing that those gentlemen were the most capable and impartial men in Ireland, the duty which the Government proposed to lay upon them was a duty which no men could perform satisfactorily. There was no foundation of law for them to work upon; there were no rules made by a higher authority than themselves for their guidance, no sanction of procedure to which they could appeal if their acts were called in question, and the position which they were to occupy was not such as would preclude the possibility of pressure being brought to bear upon them. Their salaries were to be on Votes, which was not a satisfactory method of dealing with the salaries of men who had such very difficult and controversial duties to discharge. He did not wonder that the Government shrank from saying openly they were going to put back all the tenants who were going to join the Plan of Campaign, and they were laying down no rules to guide the Arbitrators. If there were supporters of the Government who would not allow them to frame Rules for the guidance of the Arbitrators and to lay down conditions which should govern questions of reinstatement, could they think that those supporters would be likely to accept quietly the decisions of the Arbitrators if those decisions should not be in accordance with their views? He did not say that the Nationalist Members—having led certain persons into the difficulties in which they were now placed, having induced them to join the Plan of Campaign—were not acting under a certain sense of chivalrous honour which prevented them from deserting men who had accepted their guidance, but this in no way diminished the responsibility that attached to the Government, who ought to be the guardians of law and order, for proposing such a measure as that before the House. The Government said they had provided safeguards in the Bill, but he must say that the procedure proposed in the Bill was one of the most unjust things he had ever heard. A *primâ facie* case for reinstatement was to be made out in the first instance; but there was to be no appearance upon oath, and he supposed that a small sheet of paper containing the signature of the applicant would be sufficient to establish a *primâ facie* case. No power was given of getting information which would be useful for purposes of cross-examination. Surely some Rules should be laid down—something to guide the Arbitrators in the difficult duty they were asked to discharge. The landlord was apparently not to have notice until a subsequent stage, and even then there was no power to put the applicants upon oath or to summon witnesses. Then another provision, one of the most extraordinary he had ever seen, was that the Arbitrators were told that they were to take into account "the circumstances of the district." What had the circumstances of the district to do with the matter? If a district was peaceful, was everybody to be reinstated; and if a district was turbulent, was nobody to be reinstated, or was it the other way? They were entitled to know what were the intentions of Her Majesty's Government in this matter. He trusted that before the Debate closed they should hear from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs (Lord Kimberley), whose ability and adroitness in debate they all admired, and who had power sometimes to make the worse, as they considered, appear the better reason, what was his interpretation of the instruction to the Arbitrators that they were to take into account "the circumstances of the district." He would also like to ask the Prime Minister, who had said on a recent occasion that he was not going to make any impromptu speeches, to tell the House perhaps to-morrow night, by which time he could have thought it out, what effect, in his view, "the circumstances of the district" were to have on the minds and the judgment of the Arbitrators. He hoped also that the Lord Chancellor would give their Lordships the benefit of his legal ability and knowledge in guiding them in this difficulty, as to what was the intention of the Government in inserting the extraordinary sentence that the Arbitrators were to have reference to "the circumstances of the district." Perhaps the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack would not object to give his judgment upon the case, though it was not laid before him with all the paraphernalia of wig and gown. The noble Lord at least must have paid attention to the drafting of the Bill, and it would be interesting to know from the noble Lord what was the intention of the Government in putting into the Bill that most extraordinary sentence that the Arbitrators were to have reference to "the circumstances of the district." He did not propose to argue at any length as to what would be the position of the landlords under the Bill. He did not know that grievances of landlords found a very receptive place in the minds and hearts of noble Lords opposite; but it did appear to him that it was inflicting a hardship on the landlord to force upon him perhaps an insolvent tenant, instead of a solvent one; to compel him to take a man who had perhaps treated him badly, instead of one with whom he was working on terms of perfect peace. The landlord, in his judgment, would lose either way. If the farm were left derelict on account of the eviction of the tenant, as he understood the provisions of the Bill, the landlord would receive less rent for it in the future; and if the landlord had been able to keep up the farm and spend money upon it, there appeared to be no adequate security that a due return would be forthcoming. It was said by the noble Earl that the landlord might demand a sale. They first made his position as uncomfortable as they could, and then they proceeded to buy him out at a reduced price, to be fixed by their own agents. That did not seem to him to be either a fair or a reasonable position in which to place the landlord. Then there was another point. It was important to consider most carefully what would be the effect of this Bill on those who had taken farms from which tenants had been evicted. It would not, he thought, be disputed that there was an obvious desire on the part of certain persons in Ireland to prevent farms from being taken. He did not think he would be wrong in describing that as one of the cardinal points in the policy of those people. Land-grabbing was denounced in every conceivable form, though the persons guilty of this so-called offence were only exercising the ordinary and natural rights of citizenship. The land-grabbers were called "legalised brigands," "public thieves," and other epithets. The object was clear. It was to prevent new tenants from taking farms, for if that end could be attained a great blow would be struck at eviction. If farms could not be let there was, of course, less inducement to evict. He would not say that eviction was a nice and pleasant process, but in certain circumstances it had to be resorted to as a melancholy necessity. If they were going to make eviction more difficult than at present, how were they going to enforce payment of rent? It seemed to him that the farmers of Ireland—he did not complain of that—were already hedged about with every reasonable safeguard. But the matter did not stop there. It was said that the number of farms, vacant or taken, might be held to represent the barometer of peace in Ireland. Mr. Gladstone used to go about the country, some years ago, saying—"There is no peace; no settlement in Ireland. Your policy is not successful, because farms are standing empty." But would this Bill lighten or would it make more difficult the position of those who had taken farms? Could it be doubted, having regard to the views of the Irish Members, that one of the effects of the Bill would be to make the position of the new tenants more intolerable than it was at present? Was it not obvious that every man who was evicted, and saw his farm in the possession of another tenant, would see that the landlords had been coerced, and would feel that one man's life was the only obstacle which stood between him and the possession of his old farm? "Persuasion," as it was called, would be brought to bear on the new tenants to give up their farms; and it was easy to imagine what "persuasion" would be held to include under those circumstances. There could be no doubt that the Plan of Campaign was a political movement, intended to embarrass the administration of Mr. Balfour in Ireland. It should be remembered, however, that these tenants had helped to defeat the Plan of Campaign; they had trusted to British law and the British Parliament, and to desert them now and to add to their danger would not only be a wrong, but an infamy almost too great for words to condemn. No one, he imagined, would deny that the Bill was an exceptional interference with private rights, and that the only justification for it was that it would accomplish a great end and lead to a lasting peace. But did anyone really hope that the Bill, as it stood, would have that effect? No Irish Member had defended the Bill out and out, nor had it been accepted as it stood by any section of the Irish Members. The Irish Members had asked for more; they had divided against the Government in Committee of the Bill in their desire to get more, and their Lordships could not ignore the fact that the Bill would not satisfy in its entirety the real object of the Nationalists—namely, to get rid by some wholesale process of the new tenants. But though he said that, he could not deny that the Bill would be of great use to the Nationalist Party. The Bill would be of use as a precedent and as a reason for asking for more. The programme of the Irish Members was known. In their opinion—and in this they were supported by some of the English followers of the Government—rent, even judicial rent, was an immoral tax, and their intention was to take slice after slice of the landlords' property until they had reduced it to what was called prairie value. If, therefore, the Bill was not going to close the controversy, what did their Lordships gain by passing it? He knew that in asking their Lordships to reject the Bill they would be open to much misconstruction and perhaps some abuse. The supporters of the Government might go about the country and abuse their Lordships in the future as they had threatened them in the past. His opinion was that those arguments could only affect those who cared for them; and if their Lordships once yielded to them they would have done much to damage their position. If their Lordships passed this Bill, would they earn respect or bring about peace? They would do nothing of the kind? They would only add contempt to the hostility which already existed. Was this a just, expedient, fair proposal? He did not deny that there had been occasions, and there might be occasions again, when in matters of opinion and of judgment their Lordships' House ought to yield to others; but it appeared to him that the question now before the House was one pre-eminently of principle. It was a question which, more than any other, ought to be decided on the abstract ground of justice; and on that ground it seemed to him that this Bill was incapable of defence or of justification. If their Lordships passed this Bill they would cast to the winds every principle of law and government which had hitherto been received in this and every civilised country. No consideration of their comfort or their privileges should in this matter weigh with their Lordships to the slightest extent. He did not say that he should vote against the Bill without regret; but he did say that he would go into the Lobby against it without hesitation. He concluded by moving that the Bill be read a second time that day three months.

Amendment moved, to leave out ("now"), and add at the end of the Motion ("this day three months.")—(*The Lord Balfour.*)

*THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, I rise, not without some regret, to follow my noble Friend. I do not think it is generally expedient that two Members of the House on the same side should follow each other, but, my Lords, we are in exceptional circumstances. I have no doubt that a number of Peers opposite will vote for the Second Reading of this Bill. I hope that some of them will speak who are not connected with the Government. But, as far as I have seen the list of those who are likely to take part in this Debate on the opposite side of the House, this strange fact has been evident—that every one of them is either a Member, or an office-holder in the Government. That is an unusual circumstance in the case of an important Bill. But I congratulate the House on one fact connected with this Bill, and that is the position of your Lordships' House in regard to it. When important Bills come up to us from the other House we have always two duties to perform. We have to discuss the Bill on its merits, and we have to consider the authority on which it comes. Sometimes it is not very easy to reconcile these two duties Sometimes measures come to us with very little merit, but with very great authority. I congratulate the House on this fact—that this Bill has no merit at all, and that it comes to us with less than no authority. I am not going to dwell upon the circumstances under which this Bill has passed the House of Commons. I do not like to speak of what is called "the gag." The reputation and honour of the House of Commons is a matter of deep concern to all of us; but we are not the guardians of that honour, and we can do nothing to maintain it. We must trust for that to the constituencies of the country. But we can judge of that part of our duty which enjoins upon us to weigh the authority on which Bills come; we can take notice of these facts and shape our course according to the authority with which the Bill comes to us. Now, my Lords, before I pass to the Bill I wish to dissociate myself entirely from some of the arguments which have been used against the Bill out-of-doors. I shall not vote against this Bill, because I am unwilling to give a place of repentance to the wounded and fallen soldiers in what was a great social war. I speak for myself only, but I should be willing to give them a place of repentance; and with a proper tribunal, really judicial and acting under the authority and direction of Parliament, I should be willing to vote for any measure, voluntary in its character, which would facilitate the reinstatement of men who have been the dupes of others more designing and wicked than themselves. Again, I am not unwilling to vote for a measure—though some have expressed such unwillingness—which would take the Irish Church Fund for the reward of those who have disobeyed the law. On the contrary, I am rather disposed to think that the sooner that Church Fund is dispersed the better. It has done some good, no doubt, in the hands of Mr. Balfour; but at present it is a fund out of which every political job in Ireland is paid for, and will be paid for as long as it lasts. Besides, I really think that both the Government and their *protégés* have qualified themselves to take advantage of this fund. Your Lordships may remember the original destination of that fund as defined by Mr. Gladstone. It was to be spent "on those who had lost their minds—on lunatics." That was the destination appointed by Mr. Gladstone when he introduced the Irish Church Act. I have always thought that that was the most wonderful example I have ever known of the power of a great man, wielding great eloquence and authority, to impose upon a popular assembly. Could any human being believe that the Irish Church surplus was to be expended only for lunatics in Ireland? But that was swallowed by the House of Commons at the time, and it stands on record as the destination which Mr. Gladstone intended for this fund. I must say, however, that I think that those who have lost their farms in Ireland under the favourable conditions they now enjoy may be considered as having lost their minds; and I should be glad to see this fund wisely and justly distributed for their relief. Once more, it has been objected to this Bill that in the last resort it looks to the taxpayer of this country; and so it does. But I remember the time when Sir Robert Peel gave a large loan for landowners not only in Ireland, but in this country also. It was at the time of the abolition of the Corn Laws. I was myself a landlord at the time, and I took a large advantage of that loan. I spent it on emigration and on improving lands; and I flattered myself that the money was laid out to great public advantage, both locally and generally; and I, for one, would not object to any advance from public funds in Ireland which is really necessary for the healing of any of its wounds. I believe that the Purchase Act has been admirably successful; that those who have bought land under the security of loans from the public Treasury have been honest in the repayment of those loans, and it is a great encouragement to us to proceed in the same direction, provided that we do it on just and sound principles. Therefore, I throw aside all those objections to the Bill, and I concentrate my attention—and I should be glad to concentrate the attention of the House—on the real objections to this Bill. In the first place, I say that it is a Bill with a false title. It is absolutely false; it misrepresents the object of the Bill. It is called a Tenants Arbitration Bill; but the Court which this Bill sets up is not an Arbitration Court. It is not a Court to which both parties by agreement can come to settle their differences by arbitration. It is a revolutionary tribunal, before which both parties can be dragged by one of them in his own interest alone. That is not an Arbitration Bill. I say, then, that the principal title is intended to deceive the people of this country by concealing the violence of the proposals which the Bill contains. The second title is "An Act to facilitate and make provision for the migration and restoration to their holdings in Ireland of certain former tenants or their personal representatives." Why "certain former tenants?" That means that the Bill has defined the tenants that you are to protect and reward. That is what the Bill ought to have done; but it is what the Bill has not done. I have tried to draft a title which should be a strict and accurate account of the Bill, and I think a better title would have been this:—An Act to empower certain persons to reinstate in their former holdings any or all rural tenants in Ireland, or their heirs, who have lost their holdings during the last 15 years, either by bankruptcy, or dishonesty, or criminal conspiracy, or any other cause." The Bill might be described in other terms as "An Act to empower certain persons to deal with all agricultural tenancies in Ireland, so that the law may be a praise to them that do evil and a terror to them that do well." Those titles would suit the Bill perfectly; and I do not know why one or the other was not adopted, to direct the attention of the people to the monstrous character of the proposals. But as to the great peculiarities of this Bill. My noble Friend's able speech would have been exhaustive but for this: that the demerits of this Bill are absolutely inexhaustible. If every Member of this House were to speak every night for a month we should still find some new monstrosity to expose. The speech of the noble Earl who introduced the Bill was no more directed to this Bill than it was directed to the man in the moon. He might have been speaking of a different Bill altogether. He said that it was to provide for some 4,000 unfortunate men who had fallen by the Plan of Campaign. Why, my Lords, it applies to every tenant in Ireland who has lost his holding from any cause during the last 15 years. There is another characteristic of the Bill to which I wish to direct attention, and which strikes me very forcibly. It is a Bill retrospective, retroactive, and entirely *ex post facto*. I venture to say that an *ex post facto* law dealing with property in a way which is retrospective and *ex post facto* in its operation is of itself condemned as unjust and almost unprecedented. This is a Bill which is highly penal in its consequences. It punishes some and lavishes rewards on others. It punishes those who have acted in accordance with existing laws, not those who disobey a law in the future which you are now laying down. It rewards those who have disobeyed your laws in past times. It punishes those who acted under the authority of your laws, and who, on the faith of your enactments, entered into transactions with other men. It rewards those who, during a certain definite period, have acted against your authority and in violation of their obligations to society. All this it does, moreover, without one single word of provision for the future. You go back to a limit of time. How much do you take? You take in 15 years. Why do you fix upon that limit of time? Why, because it takes in the whole of the Act of 1881 and two years of the Act of 1870. Then, does it not follow that the agrarian legislation of 1881 and 1870 is disparaged and damaged, although not actually repealed? My Lords, I never expected that I would have to stand here and defend the Act of 1881. Perhaps some of your Lordships may think that I am somewhat hypocritical in doing so. My attitude with regard to that Act is well known. I have been attacked on this subject in another place by a Member of the Government, who shares with the noble Lord opposite something of the Leadership of the Ministry. I should be sorry to say anything against Sir William Harcourt. He is an old friend of mine, an old colleague, a personal connection, and in private life he is a most estimable person. In politics, I confess I have always regarded him as an opportunist of the most perfect transparency. I did in regard to the Act of 1881 that which Sir William Harcourt could not conceive any man doing. I sacrificed place, political position, and political friends rather than agree to sacrifice that which I believed to be essentially wrong in principle. Sir William Harcourt could not conceive anyone being such a fool as to do that. I would advise those who wish to pursue so unimportant a matter as to attack my political reputation should choose some other subject than my conduct in regard to the Land Act of 1881. It is a fact which, I am sorry to say, is unquestionable, that every prediction I made with regard to the Act has been amply fulfilled. It has not settled the Irish question. Everybody admits that it has not settled that question, and is not likely to do so. The speech of my noble Friend to-night was exactly the same speech we heard over and over again, if I may say so, *usque ad nauseam* before the passing of the Land Act of 1881. All these most disingenuous attacks on the landlords of Ireland we heard over and over again before this land legislation began, and they are now repeated word for word, when they cannot possibly be true. Look at the language of the Nationalist Party. Do they say that the Act of 1881 has settled the question? No, they do not. They demand more and more, and the more you give them the more they will ask. Nevertheless, I will not vote for any Bill that repeals the Act of 1881 without providing any substitute, and that is what you are asked to do by this Bill. You are asked in this Bill to strike at the existing law, to damage it to the last degree—to reward those who have defied it, whilst at the same time you are not providing anything to take the place of the Act of 1881. Let me now direct attention to the gross injustice implied in this Bill directed against the Act of 1881, as compared with what may be truly said of its effects. I will take the last category first. In the first place, it is true that it has dissociated the whole rental of Ireland from the improvement of the soil. The landlords do not now feel safe in laying out a shilling of the rental in the improvement of any land in the occupation of the tenant. It may be that many landlords, out of what Tennyson calls "old habit of the mind," still go on improving tenants' holdings; but as a rule the Act of 1881 has put an end to the improvement of the soil of Ireland held in tenancy out of the whole rental of the country. Was there ever such ruinous blow struck at the economic condition of any people? Again, that Act has made the attempt to provide that the State should fix the value of one particular article. Has that succeeded? I believe the Land Court has acted in the most conscientious way, but it has acted on no known principle and under no guidance from Parliament. All is done on the personal reliance of individual men. I say that it has not settled the question of rental in Ireland, because although the people submit sulkily to the new scale of rents, they have no real confidence in the perfect justice of the decisions; and both in the North and South of Ireland you have not unfrequent indications of the inevitable objections of the tenants to rents fixed on no known principle. In the third place the Act of 1881 proposed to give a great gain to the tenant-farmer. I deny that it has made land a shilling cheaper to those who were not holders of land when the Act was passed. On the contrary, by the encouragement which you gave to the exaggerated value of tenant-right, every man who came into a farm since the Act was passed has had to pay through the nose for the privilege. The result is, that people are as "rack-rented" as ever. Then, again, what do the farmers charge for conacre? The Land Court fixes the landlord's rent, say, at the rate of 10s. an acre; but the farmer lets the land in conacre to the labouring classes at £4 and £5, and I have seen £12 an acre. Not one farthing of advantage has gone to the people of Ireland except to the existing holders when that Act was passed. Another effect of the Act has been to accustom the people to the working of an arbitary and a secret tribunal. Look at the demoralisation which has been created as manifested in this Bill. It seems to be now generally accepted that you may remit the whole interests of fellow-subjects, certainly as to property, and indirectly as to liberty and life, to the irresponsible action of three individual men. The fact that this Bill has been brought forward shows the extent to which the people have been accustomed to giving to an arbitrary tribunal judicial power. My Lords, whatever the rents fixed by the tribunals under the Act of 1881 may have been, they are not "judicial." How often have I wondered that noble Law Lords in this House, jealous as they always are of the honour of their great profession, should have permitted the word "judicial" to be used in connection with a tribunal, which acts according to no law, but on the personal authority of individual men. Do you remember what passed after the Act of 1881 was carried? A noble Lord moved for the appointment of a Committee to consider what those Commissioners were doing. I voted against that. I thought it premature. Do you remember the objection made by Mr. Gladstone? He was furious. He quoted the words of Chief Justice Holt when he was called upon by the House of Commons to give an account of one of his decisions. He said something like this—"No; my decision was a decision on the Bench, in the robes of my office and in the discharge of my duty to the country. I will give no explanation out of the Court in which my Judgment was delivered." Mr. Gladstone held that up as a pattern —as the answer which should be given to your Lordships' Committee if they dared to ask a question of the Commissioners as to the principles upon which their judgments were based. Twelve years have passed, and the Liberal Party, or the Party which calls itself Liberal, have appointed a Committee to inquire into the working of the Act, and to question those Judges, as they are called, as to the principles of their proceedings. I noticed the other day in the public Press an observation made by a Member of this House of Commons Committee to one of the witnesses. An Irish Member interrupted the evidence and said, "This man will say or swear anything." These are the insults given to your "judicial" tribunals. I say again that in that respect the Act of 1881 has been a total failure. You have not established "judicial" rents; you have not established rents which anyone has any confidence in, because no one knows the principles upon which they have been decided. Then, my Lords, last of all I maintain that the Act of 1881 has spread political corruption through Ireland. These rents are arbitrarily settled by the arbitrary will of individual men. What do we hear said now by candidates for the House of Commons? They say "Vote for us, and we will keep in a Government who will give us new Commissioners of a different type when existing men have retired or are dead; men who will settle your rents on different principles, and who will give you your lands at prairie value." But the Act of 1881 was passed; and I agree with what my noble Friend, Lord Salisbury, said three or four years ago, that bad as it is, the Act of 1881 might work tolerably well if you only allowed it to work, kept to it, and supported the decisions of your officials. But that is exactly what you are not doing. This Bill condemns all that has been done under the Act of 1881 and for two years before. You introduce this Bill which sets aside the Act of 1881 at the very time that the illustrious author of that Act is retiring from public life; a Bill which virtually says that that Act, which was supposed to be the one great triumph of a great political career, has been an absolute failure in all its objects. My Lords, I will not vote for this Bill, because it repeals the Act of 1881, without providing any substitute for it. But I will tell noble Lords opposite, if they care to know, what are the principles upon which I would reform the agrarian law of Ireland. My noble Friend, Lord Spencer, spoke of Ireland being different from England and Scotland. Have we not acted on that view long and far enough? Are there not rules of legislation which belong to mankind and to the civilised world—natural laws which are the laws of God? You propose virtually to abolish the Act of 1881 and you substitute nothing for it. I will tell you what you should do. Go back to the natural law, the law of all civilised nations. You have adopted free trade in the produce of land; adopt the principle of free trade in land itself. Throw the land of Ireland open to all purchasers, secure them in their tenures, encourage capital expended in the improvement of the land, act as men act all the world over, and your present difficulties will disappear. But until that has been done; until some Government of common sense, learning from your successive blunders in Ireland, discover that everything that has been done only increases the difficulties you have still to deal with; until that day comes, support your existing laws and insist on their being obeyed. In the meantime I must confess that the Act of 1881 had some virtues in it. In the first place, it supports the possibility of eviction. I say that if there is property in land or in anything else, those who hire that property must pay the price of hire or they must submit to be put out. I say evictions ought to go on in Ireland just as they do in London. Is there any Member of your Lordships' House who would not be evicted to-morrow if he determined not to pay his lawful debts? Do you suppose that the laws of nature and morality are to be suspended in favour of the Irish? What folly this is! There must be a certain amount of eviction. And when I heard Lord Spencer give the figures of the cases to which this Bill would apply, I must say it seemed to me an absolute proof of the great lenity and generosity with which the landlords of Ireland had behaved. I say that under the Act of 1881—however great its failures in other respects—unjust, cruel, and capricious evictions became impossible. It was for that object the law was passed, and in that object it has succeeded, and succeeded perfectly. Have your Lordships ever read the instructive address of Justice O'Hagan in opening the Land

Court? It was his object to explain to the people of Ireland the immense advantages which it secured for them, and if you read the speech you will see, especially in the passages where he dealt with the 13th clause, that so far from the Legislature facilitating unjust eviction, it strained its ingenuity to prevent landlords having even the power of just eviction over bankrupt tenants. And what is the result? Lord Spencer tells us that the total number of men who have lost land in Ireland since 1879 is 31,759. As the Return was reported in *The Times* those figures were not quite correct. As I make it out, the Returns show a total number of tenants evicted of nearly 38,000, and if you take in those tenants who have been compelled to sell because they were bankrupt to avoid eviction, I have no doubt the total number of tenants who have been in one way or other evicted has been 50,000. Do your Lordships remember how many tenants there are in Ireland? Four hundred thousand. You will find, if I am not much mistaken, that the number evicted is a fraction more than ½ per cent. per annum. The evictions in England and in Scotland of men who have fallen in the economic battle of life are infinitely more than that. The Land Act of 1881, therefore, I hold, cannot justly be accused of not having prevented capricious evictions. Now, my Lords, I look at this Bill from another point of view. What is to be our future when this Bill is passed? My noble Friend Lord Spencer in his half-hearted speech—I wish such duties were not always imposed upon him, from his high character and well-known truthfulness of language and sincerity of character—did not tell us what was to be the new code. This Bill provides nothing for the future, but it does not follow that it has no effect on the future. I say that it will have a most disastrous effect. The very first clause will still further discourage landlords from employing their capital on the improvement of the soil in Ireland, even when in their own possession. Let your Lordships think what a mischief that is. Do you not know that Irish land in the occupation of the landlord is the only land, as a rule, upon which money is laid out in improvements? Yet you are deliberately discouraging landlords from thus employing their capital in the improvement of the soil of Ireland, and you are sentencing them to severe penalties if they dare to do so. Are we fools that the Government should ask us to adopt such a Bill as that? Have any of your Lordships read the Blue Books about the employment of labour in Ireland? Blue Books, I must say, are generally weary reading; but still there are significant facts in many of them which the intelligence of the public Press generally make public. But in one of those Irish Blue Books I saw a statement about Kerry which amused me very much. The Inspector, if I recollect right, a genuine Irishman named O'Brien, wrote of the little employment of labour in Ireland, because the small farmers worked their own land, and the landlords were discouraged in making improvements. But this Mr. O'Brien found a certain place in Kerry where a landlord was employing a large number of people, and he was amazed, and added that, no doubt, he would very soon stop. I thought it well to make some inquiries into this matter; and I found, as I expected, that this wonderful gentleman, who came all the way from England to lay out money on land in Ireland, was laying it out on land that was not in the occupation of tenants, but in his own occupation. That is the beneficent process which you wish to stop by the first clause of this Bill, and you adopt the most violent and unjust measures to stop it. By the first clause you enable an arbitrary tribunal to take from a landlord land of which he has got legitimate and legal hold, which he may have added to his demesne, which he may have largely improved, and on which he may have built houses. You take it from him, and give it back to the man who tried to rob him. Now, look at the new tenant. Under this Bill the new tenant will have to go—that is to say, solvent men have to go, and insolvent men are to be put in their place. Those men who are to go out had not to pay tenant-right; consequently, they were unmortgaged. They were free to use any capital they had on the improvement of the farms. Every other tenant got his farm by paying tenant-right, and was mortgaged up to the eyes. You are evicting men who are keeping the land in good condition, and putting in their places individuals who very likely have disobeyed your laws and have violated their contracts and obligations. Then how are these men to be provided for when they are reinstated? The noble Earl has described them as penniless. Mr. Morley has said they are not so penniless as is supposed, and that many an Irishman looks very poor; but when you come to inquire you find he has plenty of money. That is a well-known fact. It has been proved that in times when relief was distributed Irishmen hid their furniture in the bogs in order to get some of the relief. Mr. Morley says—

> "Do not suppose those men are so poor as they look; they can get command of means if they like."

If that is true it proves that in not paying their rent they were not merely unfortunate, but fraudulent; and these are the men you wish to restore. I come to another class of men who are to be turned out without a moment's hesitation. These are the men they call "planters." The term is not defined. Does it mean all new tenants? Yes, if the Arbitrators say so. These three men have absolute power to define what existing tenant means. They may condemn every existing tenant as a planter and kick him out arbitrarily. I believe there are some cases where there are planters in the strict sense of the term. Landlords having war waged against them, in spite of the advantages of the tenantry, have put in men to hold their land as a garrison. These are planters in the strict sense of the word, and I venture to say that these are the men who ought not to be turned out. What better use could you put land to, what better crop could you raise upon it—than loyal men instead of disloyal men—men who will fulfil their obligations instead of men who break them? What better use could you make of land than that? What, in the history of the world, has been so strong for the improvement of the world as planted races? And in Ireland, of all places in the world, to condemn planters! Is not all Ulster populated by planters, or the descendants of planters? Are not the whole of the King's County and Queen's County populated with the descendants of planters in another epoch of the sad history of Ireland? And all over the South and West even are there not by thousands men who are the descendants of planters? Those are the very best elements of the Irish people. What silly nonsense it is to denounce planters. I am not speaking now of its injustice in the way of dealing with men who had done nothing against your law. I am talking of the folly and idiocy of legislation directed against that element in the population which you know to be always the best and the strongest. Who are these men who are denouncing planters? Why, they are very often the descendants of planters themselves. Talk of the Celts in Ireland! There is hardly a pure Celt in the whole of Ireland. Is Parnell a purely Irish name? Is Redmond, or Dillon a purely Irish name? Are they not obviously of Norman origin? I will venture to say that they are all the descendants of planters, which, in successive waves during seven centuries, have populated Ireland. Then what is your prospect of the future? Lord Balfour asked that question. I hope it will be answered. The Solicitor General said all our Irish legislation had failed, because it always had had the effect of placing a certain number of Irishmen in a most unfair position in comparison with their neighbours. The unequal distribution of benefits! I ask your Lordships to test the future under this Bill. Look at the new inequalities which you will set up. I admit the validity of the Solicitor General's objection. I think that if you pass partial legislation which gives to one man and does not give to his neighbour, or gives very much to one and very little to his neighbour, you raise up a false standard of expectation and plant deep the roots of discontent. Look what you are doing under this Bill. First of all you have men favoured by the arbitrary selection of a triumvirate giving no reasons. My noble Friend did not tell us whether that triumvirate would make a selection or restore the evicted tenants all in a lump; but I assume that he thinks there would be some selection. The principles of that selection are not laid down by the Bill. They are absolutely in the breasts of three men. My noble Friend says he knows them to be excellent, respectable men. I have no doubt they are; but I object to this new Liberal doctrine, giving away the lives and property of men to individuals whom you know, forsooth, to be excellent and respectable men. But I am now asking what satisfaction do you think will be given by the arbitrary selection of these men among those who are not reinstated? You are there setting up a new inequality. Then look at the inequality as between farms which have been let and farms which have not been let. In the case of farms which have not been let, you turn out the landlord neck and crop, but in the case of farms which have been let to planters or genuine tenants the former tenants are not to be restored if the existing tenants object. On what principle of justice do you defend that? Do you think the claim put forward by Mr. Redmond will not be pushed to the hilt by those men who could not get back their land because it had been what they called "grabbed"? Do you think they will not be savage at the treatment they have received, and renew the agitation which you pretend to satisfy? The expectation is futile and childish in the highest degree. Then look at another inequality. Why does the Bill go back to 1879? I was myself a party to the Act of 1870, and I am very glad to remember that it was working extremely well when it was upset by the Act of 1881. A great number of tenants were undoubtedly dispossessed under the operation of the Act of 1870. Why do you pick out those ejected during the last two years of that Act and do not take those ejected during the seven preceding years? But why stop at the Act of 1870? Why do you not go back through the seven centuries during which it has been falsely said England has misgoverned Ireland? But there is another inequality, if possible, even more serious. Look at the men who have purchased their farms. Under the Church Act and various other Acts passed since 1881 a large number of men have purchased farms at high prices. Many others have purchased farms which tenants had been obliged to sell under danger of eviction, and for which they very often paid less than if they had been bought in the open market. Why, will not all these men come back and say, "We demand that our farms which we sold for a comparatively small price should be restored, or that we should receive the money which we lost by forced sale"? You will, then, I say, by this Bill create new inequalities, new injustices, and new sources of discontent. Lastly, what are you to do with the new evictions of the future? The 400,000 tenants of Ireland will, in the ordinary economic course of things, provide a new crop of bankrupts. Are they never to be evicted, and, if they are, will they not come and ask to be reinstated in the same manner that those who were evicted before them were reinstated? Is there any end to the complaints and demands due to the inequalities you are now setting up? The tribunal you are setting up is only to last for two years. But it will necessarily last longer than two years, and, therefore, you will have two permanent Commissions in Ireland—one to declare what shall be a fair rent, and another to let men off for not paying it. Legislation of quite an Irish character! What a triumph of Irish ideas! I say, then, that this Bill—and it is my most serious complaint against it—will destroy the existing Land Act of 1881, and will substitute nothing for it. "Chaos" is the word which represents the condition it would bring about. As to the larger aspects of the question, I wish to say that I have some hope that it will not be without a great effect. We are now in a crisis of the political world, in which Parties are being reconstructed. This Bill will help it. It is a perfect foretaste of the kind of legislation which we may expect from an Irish Parliament; it is a perfect specimen of the legislation which we are now having under a Government which is the servant of an Irish faction. There is not a principle governing human society which is not violated by this Bill, not a principle of common sense which is not abandoned in it, not a truth of history which is not set at naught by it, and that is what you will have in Ireland and what you are having now under the present Government. I ask the noble Earl the Prime Minister, the head of the Government—or who is called the head of the Government—though I have some doubt as to how far he is the head of the Government—he has the place and patronage, but I do not think he has the power—is this Bill the product of his clear intellect, of his calm sense, is it even the product of his sense of the ridiculous? The noble Earl the other day was pleased to allude to the place in which I sit in this House. It was a trivial circumstance for the Prime

Minister of England to refer to, but if he wishes to know why I sit here on the Opposition side of the House I will tell him. I sit on this Bench because I opened my career in this House on that Bench in the year in which he was born, and during the time he was passing from his long clothes to his small clothes. I sat upon that Bench in company with men whom I loved and have lost, and I never expect to be associated with any others who can be compared with them. For 32 years I sat on the Benches opposite as a Member of the Liberal Party, and I claim to know what Liberal principles are as well as any of the noble Lords opposite. I do not recognise in them my leaders—to teach me what are Liberal principles. Where did the Liberal Party get this new love for secret, arbitrary, irresponsible tribunals dealing with the lives, and liberties, and properties of the people? My Lords, my notion of Liberal politics is this—that we should always be on the look-out for every new idea, and for every old idea with a new application which may tend to meet the growing requirements of society. Hitherto I have seen the Leaders of the Liberal Party like men standing on a watch tower to whom others could apply and ask, not "Watchman, what of the night?" but "Watchman, what of the morning and of the coming day?" Where are you standing? Nowhere; but sitting on the fence, perpetually thinking on which side of it you will put your feet down in order to collect votes and unite the cabals of the different Parties in the House of Commons. Look at the speech of the noble Earl the other day. Why does he expect me to sit where I had sat for the last 32 years? Am I expected to sit behind him with his teaching to the Liberal Party? Look at his speech at Edinburgh—

> "Here I am, gentleman, the Prime Minister of England. I have no enthusiasms of my own; I ask you for impulse. I have no opinions of my own; I ask of you direction."

He sought for both impulse and direction, not in his own excellent head, not even in the great traditions of his Party, but from the people who happened to be gathered in a public meeting before him. Am I to sit behind men of that kind, and am I to receive from them the principles of the Liberal Party? No, my Lords, I cannot. The Party that claims to be Liberal, I hold, has been descending rapidly from its once high position. My Lords, Whig and Tory are names that are now pretty well played out. I have been born a Whig, and have been attached to the Whig Party for many years. That Party has passed through many periods of great trial, and among them was the period of Mr. Pitt. Mr. Pitt called himself a Whig to the last. He claimed to belonging to that great historical Party, and I say that, with all its faults, descending, as it sometimes has done, to the position of a faction, to that Party in the main England owes her constitutional liberties, and I am proud to have belonged to it. But what do I see on the Benches near me? I see my noble Friends on the Conservative side of the House, and I say that in fundamental matters they are more really Liberal than noble Lords opposite. I never hear from them any argument in favour of narrow, irresponsible, secret tribunals dealing with the liberties of the people. And therefore, my Lords, I say, following the advice of the noble Lord opposite in his famous speech at Paisley—out of which he has tried to wriggle on many occasions, but most ineffectually—I dissent and depart from men who have debased the position of English Ministers—debased is perhaps too strong a word for the noble Lord; I will say lowered—who have lowered the position of English Ministers by a servile compliance with an Irish faction, by the sacrifice, as I have shown your Lordships to-day, in this Bill of every principle which has hitherto governed the Liberal Party. There is another thing with regard to which I have hope from this Bill. The Bill will not pass this House, and its rejection will strengthen our position in the country; for the country has no interest in this measure. In so far as it understands the Bill at all, it sees that it is a monstrous violation of every principle. It is against the will of the predominant partner, as the noble Lord called England; it is against the will of England by a large majority, and there are indications that it is against the will of Scotland too. The noble Earl lifts his eyebrows in surprise. But I have just returned from Scotland; I have held conversations with men who are advanced Liberals, and I heard one of them say, "I am a bit of a Radical, but this Irish Bill I cannot stomach." This Bill will, I hope, do you harm in the country, because it is such a barefaced exposure of the arts of arbitrary government. Well, my Lords, I rejoice that twice within 12 months this House has had a great duty to perform—we have delivered Ireland from a great peril, and we have redeemed England from a great disgrace.

*LORD MONKSWELL said, that, in any circumstances it would be with the greatest diffidence that he would address the House in a Debate of this description; but as the Bill came from that Department of the Government which he represented in the House, he desired to say a few words in support of it. He was sorry the noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill had not attuned his speech to the tone of the noble Earl who introduced it. He was sorry the noble Lord should have made what he thought was an exasperating speech. The noble Lord certainly used language of the strongest possible description in denunciation of the Bill. The noble Lord said the Bill was an "infamy too great for words." And why did he give it that description? Because, he said, it rendered the condition of the planters worse than before. But the Bill did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, it made the position of the planters better than before. By compelling unreasonable landlords to come to terms with their tenants it tended to do away with the animosity with which planters were regarded; and therefore, so far as the Bill operated at all on the planters, its operation was distinctly favourable to them. Indeed, if he thought it well to retort on the noble Lord the language he had used in regard to the Bill, he would say—and he thought he could say so with a great deal more reason—that the rejection of the Bill would be, from the point of view of the planters, "an infamy too great for words." The noble Lord also complained that the Bill made no distinction with regard to the tenants it proposed to reinstate. The Bill appointed Arbitrators; the Government thought their hands ought to be as little fettered as possible, and if the Arbitrators were to be trusted at all they could be trusted to deal with those questions and difficulties which the noble Lord had put forward. The noble Lord contended that there ought to be in the Bill Rules to regulate the procedure of the tribunal. But if that were done it would be only making more difficult the position of the Arbitrators, for they would have to interpret rules of procedure, which after they had passed through the ordeal of the House of Commons might be framed in such a way that it would not be easy to interpret them. The position occupied by the Government in regard to the Arbitrators was, as he had said, that they ought to have as free a hand as possible. The noble Duke who followed the noble Lord said that the Bill had no merits and less than no authority. It appeared it had less than no authority because what the noble Duke called "the gag" was applied in the House of Commons. If the noble Duke held the view that a Bill which passed the House of Commons under "the gag"—or rather under the threat of "the gag," for "the gag" in this instance was not used at all—had no authority, he did not quite understand how the noble Duke supported the actions of the late Conservative Government in Ireland under their Perpetual Coercion Act, which was passed by means of "the gag" in the House of Commons. If the noble Duke was consistent—and he seemed to think that consistency was a very great virtue indeed—he would have condemned the Perpetual Coercion Act of the Conservative Government as an Act of no authority. The noble Duke complimented the noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty on his high character; but, all the same, he did not hesitate to accuse the noble Earl of a disingenuous attack on the Irish landlords. It might have been an attack which gave the noble Earl great pain to make; it was an attack that was made in the hearing of a great many Irish landlords who were perfectly capable of answering the noble Earl; but why the noble Duke should call the attack disingenuous it was difficult to understand. He would not follow the noble Duke in his disquisitions on the Land Act of 1881, except to say that though the noble Duke complained of it—it was very natural that that Act should be followed by other Acts. It did not follow from that circumstance that the

Act of 1881 was a failure. The Act of 1881 was the best measure that could have been put forward at the time, because Parliament was then only in the initial stages of understanding the Irish Land Question; and when they got to understand that question more, other Acts were passed to do away with the anomalies and injustices which the Act of 1881 had left untouched. The objection which was taken to the Bill on principle would, no doubt, be of great force if it could be substantiated. It was said that the Bill put a premium upon fraud and lawlessness. He did not deny that the Plan of Campaign had been called an illegal conspiracy by a high judicial authority, but there was another legal pronouncement which put the Plan of Campaign in a different light. The Mathew Commission, in Section 41 of their Recommendations, said—

> "Whatever may be said as to the character of the combination into which the tenants entered, we do not think that, as a body, they deserve to be stigmatised as fraudulent and dishonest."

Those two pronouncements were not so difficult to reconcile as perhaps they might appear at first sight. He looked upon the matter in this way—that they must discriminate between the tenants who joined the Plan of Campaign and the leaders who organised the Plan of Campaign. The leaders, no doubt, incurred great responsibility, but their conduct was not at issue before the House. What was at issue was the conduct of the tenants who had joined the Plan of Campaign—the tenants who were called by the noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill "the dupes of the Plan of Campaign." The noble Duke had acknowledged, very fairly, that the Plan of Campaign was a great social war, and had said that he would not object to any fair Bill for the reinstatement of those tenants, simply because they had joined the Plan of Campaign; and in that the argument of the noble Duke was to be preferred to the argument of the noble Lord. But let them for a moment consider the question of the morality of the tenants who had joined the Plan of Campaign. There was not the slightest doubt that those tenants were—whether rightly or wrongly—smarting severely under a sense of injustice, and that they followed the advice of their most trusted and revered leaders. The morality of the Plan of Campaign depended, to a great extent, on the *bonâ fides* of that sense of injustice; and that the tenants had that *bonâ fide* sense—whatever might have been the merits of the case—could hardly be denied. Under those circumstances, surely it was natural for the tenants to follow the advice of their leaders? He asked the House to put a charitable construction on the acts of those tenants. A well-known exemplary Prelate used to say, whenever he saw a man who had succumbed to temptation—"But for the grace of God I might be in that man's place." He wanted that to be the spirit in which their Lordships approached the question of the morality of the Plan of Campaign. The noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill very fairly acknowledged that, from a certain point of view, the conduct of the Nationalist leaders with regard to the reinstatement of the evicted tenants might be considered to be chivalrous. He, therefore, put it to noble Lords opposite whether, after all, the action of the tenants joining the Plan of Campaign might not have been dictated, however mistakenly, by generous motives? Suppose the Irish landlords were placed in the position of those tenants, was it perfectly certain that they would not have succumbed to the temptation to which the tenants had succumbed? It appeared to him that those characteristics which led landlords to take an extreme view with regard to the rights of landlords led tenants to take an extreme view with regard to the rights of tenants. Surely it was too much to talk about the immorality of the tenants in following the advice of their leaders in the Plan of Campaign. Surely it was not an unamiable or a vicious disposition to take upon trust, or with too great confidence, the advice of those with whom one was associated? Surely, too, it was only fair that they should recognise that a person might take a very strong view, even a violent view, of one side or the other of this question of the land in Ireland and yet be perfectly honest in his convictions. One word about Section 13 of the Act of 1891. It appeared to him that the Conservative Government themselves, when they introduced that section, must have taken the same view with regard to the conduct of the Plan of Campaign tenants that he was endeavouring to impress upon their Lordships' House. The noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill complained that it proposed to give privileges to those who had indulged in lawlessness and disorder in Ireland. Why that was precisely what the Conservative Government did by Section 13 of the Act of 1891, because by that section the Conservative Government gave to the tenants of the Plan of Campaign special facilities for obtaining public money, and some was obtained even by tenants who had forcibly resisted eviction. Surely it was too much to expect that the Government should place an insuperable barrier to the restoration of these tenants to their holding simply because they had yielded to the Plan of Campaign! Then with regard to compulsion, the Government thought that the experience of the past taught them that compulsion was necessary. They contended that compulsion was necessary because very few tenants had availed themselves of Section 13 of the Act of 1891. He would not trouble their Lordships with any further observations, except to say that the situation was undoubtedly extremely critical, and he hoped and trusted that the House would co-operate with the Government in endeavouring to remedy a state of things that constituted a constant menace to the tranquillity and well-being of Ireland.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON said, that no one would really complain of the tone and temper of the speech to which they had just listened, but he ventured to think that some of them would like to have had it infused by a little more practical acquaintance with the subject-matter of the Debate, though he admitted that to deal with a subject-matter so intricate and difficult would tax the powers of any speaker. He had for the last 24 years had the honour of a seat in that House, and he believed since he first entered it there had not been a single Session in which there had not been some legislation attempted, more or less, with respect to Ireland. They had got during that period four Land Bills, and he was afraid to say how many other measures affecting the land of Ireland. He confessed that he had come to the conclusion that any legislation, by whomsoever proposed, to be really beneficial must comply with four conditions: It must be founded upon precedent and experience; it must be founded on sound principle; it must have some promise of finality in it, and the machinery by which it was proposed to work its provisions must be adequate to the ends in view. He ventured to say that the Bill now before the House fulfilled no one of these conditions in any respect. Take the first—the question of precedent. He knew it was asserted that the Compensation for Disturbance Act of 1880, the Land Act of 1881, the Arrears Act of 1882, were precedents in point. But he would point out that every one of those measures was limited to holdings, the Poor Law valuation of which did not exceed £30, whilst the scope of the Bill before the House had been enlarged, so as to include all holdings of every character which had been rendered vacant by any means whatever since 1879. He should be curious to know whether the noble Lord on the Woolsack, when he took part in this Debate, could quote any precedent for a grant of public money, under these circumstances, to a body of men who had been declared by the highest judicial authorities to have taken part in an illegal conspiracy? He agreed that Clause 13 of the Act of 1891 did go further than the Acts to which he had referred, but that Act was optional and not compulsory in its character, and the option which was given under it was to be exercised within six months. It was said that that Act had failed. To a certain extent it had failed; but why? Because the popular leaders in Ireland had done their very utmost to prevent those whom it was intended to benefit from taking advantage of its provisions. Some of the tenants did take advantage of its provisions, but the great mass of them followed the bad advice which was given to them by those who had given them bad advice before, and they declined to avail themselves of the provisions of the Act; therefore, there was really no precedent in point in that Act for legislation so drastic and so exceptional in its character as the Bill before the House. He now came to a question of principle. Could it be said that any sound principle was established by a Bill which passed over the great majority of tenants who, under circumstances of exceptional temptation, and sometimes of exceptional peril, fulfilled their obligations, and which promised a boon to those who had done none of these good things, but who were led away by bad advice, and who had repudiated obligations which they had entered into voluntarily, and had thereby got evicted from their holdings? And yet to these latter parties it was proposed by this Bill to apply not only public moneys—to which their Lordships were, perhaps, not entitled to object if the people's Representatives in the other House chose to vote away English money for such a purpose—but the Bill also proposed that the remains of the funds of the Irish Church, that was originally devoted to spiritual uses, should be diverted from those objects by Act of Parliament, and should now be dissipated by this Bill upon people who had entered into a conspiracy declared to be illegal by the highest authorities, and stigmatised as unjust by the head of the Church to which these tenants belonged. Surely there never was such a travesty of justice as this. He was old enough to remember when Mr. Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister, denounced a very moderate proposal for the allocation of a portion of this Church surplus for a very different purpose as a fraud upon the important interests which were created under the Disestablishment Act. He observed that the same opinion seemed to be held by the present Government in the case, at least, of the Welsh Church, because, when he turned to the Welsh Disestablishment Bill—one of the abortive measures of the Government—he found the express statement that under no circumstances was any portion of the Church funds derived from the disestablishment of the Welsh Church to be applied to any purposes in the reduction of rates, so carefully guarded were those funds. And yet it was proposed by this Bill to dissipate the funds of the Irish Church for very unworthy objects. With regard to the question of finality, he did not for a moment deny that it was impossible to achieve finality in politics. They could not bind the next generation; but what they could say was that, during the continuance of the present generation, no attempt should be made to tamper with the provisions of an Act passed in that generation. But no assurance of that kind was given in the present Bill. The Representatives of the people of Ireland had been challenged over and over again to say whether, if any compromise could be arrived at under the Bill, they would be content to hold out the olive branch and stop the land war in Ireland. What was the answer? The answer was either silence or a distinct refusal to give any pledge of that kind or character. He saw also that the Bill found no favour even with those whom it was intended to benefit. It was only that morning he was reading an account of a meeting of evicted tenants held in Cork at the close of last week. What happened at that meeting? The President denounced as traitors to their country the Nationalist Members, who had permitted dust to be thrown in their faces by the Government; he said he was convinced that such a Bill would not pass; but if it did, it fell far short of the demands of the evicted tenants which were embodied in the Bill introduced by Mr. O'Kelly last Session. That was not encouraging; but this gentleman went even further, for he said that the time had come when it was necessary for the tenants to take action for themselves, when the grabber should be made to feel the power of public opinion, and when he should be let severely alone by the whole population. Everyone acquainted with Ireland knew what was meant by such expressions as "organised public opinion," and "letting them severely alone." They meant boycotting, and their Lordships well knew what stood behind boycotting. But there was another party in the question who ought to receive some consideration from their Lordships' House. Those were that numerous body of respectable men who had taken evicted farms as a matter of business. There was a meeting of those who had taken such farms, also in the City of Cork within the last 10 days, and with one voice they declared that no greater injustice could be inflicted upon them than that which was inflicted upon them indirectly by this Bill. He asked, therefore, if the Representatives of popular opinion in Ireland in another place, if the evicted tenants themselves, and if the new tenants all with one voice rejected these proposals what chance was there of there being any finality whatsoever under the Bill? Hitherto every concession that had been made by Parliament had been used as a stepping-stone to something else. There had been two remarkable instances of this, both of which were initiated by Bills in their Lordships' House. One was the admission of leaseholders to the benefits of the Act of 1881, from which they had been deliberately excluded by Mr. Gladstone under the original Act, and the other was Clause 13 of the Act of 1891. Both of these were voluntary concessions made by a Government who commanded not only a majority in this House, but also a majority in the other branch of the Legislature, and not the smallest thanks had been given for these concessions by those who had benefited. On the contrary, it was now asked that an advance should be made on the step taken in the Act of 1891, without any of the safeguards which were in that Act. With regard to the machinery by which it was proposed to work this Bill, that machinery seemed to be founded upon the same principle which Sidney Smith once described as government by commission composed of three barristers of seven years' standing, whom he termed the favourite animals of the Whigs. They had in the tribunal under the Bill three Commissioners. Of the principal member of the tribunal, Mr. Piers White, he could not but speak with respect. He was the leading member of the Equity Bar, and was a man of impartiality, but one who, up to the present, had had very little experience of the Land Question. Mr. Fottrell, the second Commissioner, was undoubtedly a man of ability and of intimate acquaintance with all the bearings of the Land Question, but he had not been hitherto known as a special sympathiser with the landlords. As regarded the third Commissioner, he thought the less said of him the better. The warmest admirers of Mr. Greer must admit that a more thorough-going partizan could not have been selected. And these gentlemen were entrusted with what? In the first place, they were to be entrusted with the reinstatement of all tenants where the Land Courts were in the possession of holdings or where the holdings were derelict. In the second place, they were to be entrusted with the compensation of those tenants whom they could not reinstate because their farms were full and the new tenants objected; and, in the third place, they were to be entrusted with the compensation of those tenants, not only with a money value, but, by the assistance of the Land Commissioners, with other farms purchased for them in some other district of Ireland. The whole management of a very large portion of Ireland would pass under their hands, and, in addition to all these things, by another clause, if the landlord called on the tenant to purchase after reinstatement, and the tenant agreed to do so, they were to be empowered to hand in the case to the Land Commission, who would be bound to effect a purchase. Well, what would be the result of this if the Act was largely availed of? If the Commissioners took a lenient view, or what would be called, perhaps, by some a "wide" view of the subject, he ventured to think that the money which was available for purchase under the last Act of Parliament passed for that purpose would prove insufficient for the end in view, and Parliament would be further asked to supplement that by a further grant of public money. But supposing that were not the case, were ever powers so large and legislation so drastic entrusted to a Board of three gentlemen, none of whom had yet taken the first rank in public life, and none of whom had risen to the Bench? He could hardly conceive anything more serious than the vista which was thus opened up both to landlord and tenant, because mistakes once made could not be redressed, and injustice if it had once been done on the one side or the other would remain, and could not be remedied. Some allusion had been made by his noble Friend who had just sat down to objections to the title of the Bill. That seemed to him (Viscount Midleton) to have been a drafting blunder. The alteration in the title was not what was objected to, but the alteration in the scope of the Bill. In his first statement Mr. Morley had estimated that the number of tenants affected by the Bill was 4,000, of whose farms from 1,400 to 1,500 were in the hands of new tenants. It now appeared that the figure had been under-estimated. They had to go back to 1879, and it turned out that the number of cases in which tenants had left their holdings had not been 4,000, but nearer 20,000; the exact number was still to be defined, and these cases were not only of tenants who were still in Ireland, and even of those who had gone to America and other countries and were to be permitted to return, but of tenants who had voluntarily sold their occupations to their landlords. These might now claim to be off their bargain and to be reinstated. The sole safeguard against monstrous injustice was the chance that two of the three Arbitrators would refuse to listen to unreasonable applications. This power was altogether too great to place in the hands of any three men or of a tribunal not only in Ireland, but the highest in the land—namely, their Lordships' House. Yet this was the Bill which Parliament was asked to pass at the fag-end of a Session—brought in when Members of the other House were weary—never having been introduced in a practical form till July, having been laid on the shelf since it was read a first time, and those who wished to discuss it in the other House were subjected to the gag and the guillotine. Anything like fair discussion was absolutely refused. The other House was told that if by a particular day the whole matter was not concluded the Bill would be passed through all its stages by the power of the majority. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had animadverted very strongly on the impropriety of their Lordships' House's cognizance of the way in which business was conducted in another place. And he (Viscount Midleton) entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman. He thought it entirely beyond the province of their Lordships' House. But this, at least, he might say: that if any compromise had been rejected and any Amendment had been refused, and the greater proportion of the Amendments had not been discussed at all, the Bill came up to their Lordships under very different circumstances from what it would have come up under after a free and fair discussion had been given to it in another place. It stood to reason that a Bill dealing with such important interests needed very careful attention and discussion. Some Members of the Government only began to understand the Bill after it had been in the House for a considerable time, and after what he had heard that night he was inclined to doubt whether some of them understood it yet. All he could say was that a more complicated piece of legislation, one affecting wider interests and going down to deeper principles, it had never been his misfortune to encounter. A great deal had been heard in the course of the discussion of the "irreconcilables" in Ireland. The only irreconcilables whom he had ever come in contact with were those who were determined that there should be no landowners at all in Ireland. Speaking of the Irish landlords as a class, he was pursuaded that they were not irreconcilables of any sort or class. Ninety-nine hundredths of the landowners were only too anxious to bury the hatchet, and to put an end to an unhappy dissension which they had neither initiated nor fomented, but for which those who declared themselves their worst enemies were responsible. Not only were the dissensions not begun by the landlords, nor continued by them, but at the earliest possible moment they would be happy to put an end to them. They had a real and heartfelt sympathy for many of the deluded men who had been misled and had adopted the courses they had pursued through the advice of men whom they had trusted. He believed that any measure drawn in a fair and equitable form which proposed to deal with such a question would receive not only the hearty, but the active support of the great mass of the Irish landowners. Individuals these might be—though he had not come across them—who might object, but there were individuals who were not to be taken as samples of the class to whom they belonged. But had any such offer been made? Finality in this matter had been repudiated by those who considered themselves qualified to speak for the Irish tenants. It had been notorious that if the Bill contained compulsory powers it would not be accepted by those who sat on the Opposition side of the House. If, even at the eleventh hour, there was the slightest chance of the withdrawal of the compulsory clause, if there had been a semblance of promise on the part of Her Majesty's Government that they would endeavour to secure a full discussion in the other branch of the Legislature for the clauses and Amendments which had not yet been discussed at all, he believed that the matter might still be settled. But no such hope had been held out, and no such hope would be held out, because Her Majesty's Government dared not risk it. The Government dared not offend the men who kept them in power; and so long as that view prevailed good and useful legislation for Ireland was impossible. Some day a statesman might arise who would be superior to the claims of Party, and who would endeavour, looking at it from a broad and statesmanlike point of view, to settle this difficult question. If so, he (Viscount Midleton) was sure he might be promised the active and hearty support of all who were interested in the welfare of Ireland. There was one sentence to which the Chief Secretary had given utterance which would find a response in the breast of everybody who had the interests of Ireland at heart—

> "Do not let these unfortunate men be made the pawns in the political game."

That is exactly what they had been made for the last 15 years. But they had not been made the pawns in the political game by the Conservative Party. They had been made the pawns by professional politicians on the other side of the Channel, who thought they could use them with advantage—who no doubt, in some instances, believed they were serving their country by inducing these unfortunate men to join in an agitation which could have but one result, and which had had the result which might have been anticipated—namely, their ruin, more or less complete. He believed that in those who owned the land in Ireland there was no bitter feeling—nothing but a desire to bury the memories of the past, and to restore those amicable relations which used to exist all over Ireland between landlord and tenant, and which he was thankful to say in many parts of Ireland still subsisted. But if that were to come about, remedial legislation must not be accompanied with injustice, and must not be launched at the head of Parliament at a time when it could not be properly considered. If he saw the slightest prospect that this Bill would really be for the benefit of the country his voice would be raised in its favour even now. But he could not see that it would be. The Bill was founded on no precedent. It was contrary to the lessons of experience, and there was no principle underlying it. There was no finality in it, and he was convinced that, if passed, it would be simply used as leverage by which further and still more objectionable measures would be demanded as a matter of right. Nor was the machinery proposed sufficiently strong or impartial for the task assigned to it. He regretted that one more opportunity of healing divisions in Ireland had not been availed of. One more chance had gone which, if it had been differently utilised by noble Lords opposite and their supporters, might have been successful; therefore, he should feel compelled, when the Division was called, to vote with his noble Friend below him.

Lord MUSKERRY said, the measure which was now before their Lordships was one calculated to do immense harm to Ireland. In the past years English statesmen by their legislation encouraged disloyalty, dishonesty, and crime in Ireland. This Bill was simply a continuation of the same disastrous policy. Was there in either House a man having any stake in Ireland, or any regard for her welfare, who supported the Bill? Who were the Irish Members who voted for it in the other House? What stake had they in the country? Had they an interest in seeing Ireland prosperous and contented? When addressing their Lordships last year he quoted from speeches made by Irish Members who had supported the Government, showing clearly what the real meaning and object of the land agitation was—namely, the destruction of English power in Ireland. The speeches of the Nationalist Members were very mild when made in England compared with their words in Ireland and America. It seemed incredible that statesmen could bring forward such a measure as this to restore men to farms from which they were evicted for non-fulfilment of their just and lawful obligations; and remember that many of these men refused to pay their rents and let themselves be evicted not because they were unable to pay, but under the advice and at the instigation of those who were supporting the Government in the other House. The Government wished to restore those who acted dishonestly, and to do this in many cases they must turn out honest and industrious men from their homes. They were teaching and had taught a fine lesson to the people of

Ireland. "Agitate; make a disturbance; break laws both human and Divine, and the Government will give you what you ask. But be honest and law-abiding, and the exigencies of public policy prevents the Government from protecting you or guarding you from robbery; you are no use to the Government. You are not represented by their friends and supporters." This might be statemanship, but it was not statesmanship that would do good to Ireland. The dupes of the Irish Nationalists were to be restored at the expense of the honest men. This was neither honourable or just. How many of the noble Lords who were supporting this Bill really knew anything of Ireland; how many of those who voted for it in the other House knew anything of the country? He did not know if the noble Earl at the head of the Government had ever been to Ireland. The noble Earl had admitted that he was not certain of anything with regard to Ireland, and he (Lord Muskerry) was not aware if he knew Ireland or Ireland knew him except through the Press—unless indeed he had been at Punchestown. The noble Earl, in his speech on the Home Rule Bill, honoured him by mentioning his name. His noble Friend the Marquess of Waterford, speaking afterwards, informed the noble Earl that he was one of those who represented the loyal minority of the South and West of Ireland. Now, that was not a small minority. but it was so scattered as to be outnumbered in individual constituencies. Surely no Englishmen of any class, and much less their Lordships, would deny what he always understood was so dear to the English heart, and that was fair play and a fair hearing. Their legislation had practically left that minority no representation in the other House, and it was to their Lordships' House they must look to have the grievous wrongs they had already suffered brought before Parliament, and to protest against any further injustice. The English Government had shown no gratitude to the Loyalists of Ireland. The honour of England was often spoken of and often praised, but that honour had been sadly prostituted by statesmen in their dealings with the Irish landowners. Last year the Government were willing to commence the process of dismembering the Empire to satisfy their Irish friends in the House of Commons. He would never believe that the great mass of the English people sanctioned that Bill, and unless the English character was greatly changed this Bill, to turn honest and industrious men out of their homes in order to reinstate defaulters, would not be to their liking either. How many of their Lordships, or how many of those who voted for this Bill in the Commons cared what happened in Ireland so long as they were not personally concerned? But they who lived there, they who had seen measure after measure passed (some passed, others proposed) fatal to the true interests of Ireland, they who had seen their property confiscated without compensation and for mere Party purposes, they took some interest both in the measures when they came before Parliament and in their working afterwards. He could well believe that in both Houses they were weary of Irish affairs; but whose fault was it that they were so persistently before the Government? It was their own. Give Ireland fair, just, and firm legislation, and they would no longer have such cause to complain. He might be speaking somewhat strongly, but it was the truth, and what one of the Government—if he were in his place, if he were one of those who had been so unjustly treated—what one of them would not use the same, or stronger, language? What language did their Irish friends use in speaking of Members of the Government? Take, for instance, a comparatively mild extract from *United Ireland* about Lord Spencer when he was Viceroy—

> "He" (Lord Spencer) "stuck at nothing—not at secret torture; not at subsidising red-handed murderers; not at knighting jury-packers; not at sheltering black official villainy with a coat of darkness."

Why was this said of the noble Earl? He would tell them. Because the noble Earl did his duty fearlessly and like a true man—because, as a result of the action of the Government such a state of things had arisen as called for the most severe and drastic measures. Lord Spencer had to carry these measures out, and he did so in a way that gained him the admiration and respect of every loyal and honest man in the country, and that was more than some other Members of that Government could say. When Sir George

Trevelyan in one of his speeches used these words—

> "Why did Lord Spencer leave such a very hateful memory? I should imagine the reason was that he vindicated law and order"

—he should have said who had the very hateful memory of Lord Spencer. They were the Government's own friends; the men at whose instance this Bill was before their Lordships, and the reason for their hatred was that the noble Earl vindicated law and order. Though noble Lords opposite might support this Bill they knew well that it was not an honest Bill, that it was not just. It was only a political weapon, and a very dirty one, too. Their Lordships had doubtless heard of the many agrarian murders which had stained Ireland. They had heard a little of the dastardly crime of maiming cattle, but they had not heard of the 100th part of the serious assaults, of the terror in which whole districts were kept by scoundrels who were too lazy to do honest work, and who expected that if they could only create disturbance enough they would get what they asked from the Government. It was all very well to hear of these things, but he fancied that if some of the Members of the Government lived in Ireland and witnessed the crimes done there—crimes which, in times gone by, their friends instigated and encouraged by their speeches—they would take a very different view of the situation. Did they see some of the results of their policy, they might consider if, for once, it were not well to sacrifice policy in the interests of justice. The Government practically evicted the Irish Church from her position as an Established and Endowed Church. If this Bill became law, was she to take advantage of it? There was one thing he would recommend to the serious consideration of the Government, and that was if they intended legislating for Ireland on the same lines that they had done hitherto, and were doing, they should provide some fund to keep the victims of their policy from starvation. They had been very generous with other people's property; but when it came to their receiving money, ah! then the Government would have its pound of flesh. Should their unfortunate debtor, through no fault of his, but as an outcome of the Government's policy, be unable to pay quit rent, tithe rents, or other charge, what mercy did they show? The mercy that droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven? No; in this case it was frozen rain, and neither blessed they that gave nor they that received. He could quote to their Lordships pages of extracts from speeches made on the Irish Land Laws by men who afterwards brought in and supported measures so different to the sentiments they expressed before, that it was difficult to believe they were the same men. Who was morally responsible for the agrarian crimes in Ireland? Those who by their legislation encouraged agitators to spread ruin through the country. It was said that it was never too late to mend, and he trusted that, as a sign that they in England might expect some fairness in the future, some consideration, some scant measure of justice as a sign that they might hope they would throw out this measure in its entirety.

Lord Muskerry

LORD VENTRY said, that after the able manner in which the shortcomings and danger and injustice of this measure had been exposed, he should have been well content to have given a silent vote against it; but residing as he did for a great part of the year in Ireland, and especially residing in one of those counties which were mentioned by name by the noble Earl who introduced the measure, he thought it his duty to say a few words and give a few reasons why he could not support it. He, for one, could not see the necessity of such a measure as this. He could understand that there were Party reasons why the Bill should be introduced. But that there were political reasons for its introduction of any great force he was prepared to deny. This question was always approached as if these evicted tenants, whatever their present position, were at the time of their conviction in a helpless and hopeless condition. Anybody who knew the practical working of the Land Laws in Ireland knew that it had been the constant habit of tenants who found themselves in difficulties to dispose of their interest in their holdings. That he could answer for; it was the common practice before the passing of the Act of 1881. Then, out of the North of Ireland—out of Ulster—it was accomplished with the consent of the owner. In Ulster the tenant-right custom existed which enabled tenants to do so without that permission. But since the passing of the Act of 1881, the custom which previously was permissive became a statutory right on the part of the tenant, and that right often was exercised by him. But for one case in which it had been exercised recently it was availed of 20 times before that Act passed. And why? Because every obstacle was thrown by the political advisers of the people in the way of their adopting that remedy, and also for another reason—namely, because the tenants, from the character of recent legislation, and from the constant hopes that were held out to them of further legislation, had been led to believe that some boon, whether it might be the reduction of rent, or the abolition of rent, or whether it might be some specially-favoured system of purchase—whatever it might be, they had been living in hopes of some change being brought about by legislation. Therefore, naturally, when they got into difficulties they held on, as was said, like grim death to their holdings, and refused to accept even an exorbitant price for their holdings when they could get it. There was nothing that an Irish tenant was more jealous of than that his neighbour should get the better of him. And they had a natural feeling that if they parted with their little holding to-day somebody else would hold it for nothing to-morrow. They therefore refused to avail themselves of the remedy which the law put into their hands to enable them to get out of their difficulties. He would like to give one recent instance to show the amount of money that a tenant might put into his pocket in this way. He had heard of a case quite recently in which a tenant paying £30 a year rent — the Poor Law valuation being £30, so that he was not rack-rented — was evicted owing several years' rent. He was induced to sell his interest, and he obtained for that £475. Out of that £475 a sum of £85 only was claimed on the part of the landlord. The man, therefore, who had held a holding at £30 a year went away with £390 in his pocket. Well, he (Lord Ventry) did not think the tenant under these circumstances had very much to complain of. There was no question that in 99 cases of 100, where the tenant was evicted, if he sold the holding—not always to the highest bidder, but to a tenant approved by the landlord—he would go away with a substantial sum generally far more than the commercial value of his interest in the holding. So much for that. But he certainly had asked himself, whilst listening to the speech with which the noble Earl introduced the Bill, whether the Government ever really intended that the Bill should pass. His firm belief was that if they intended a Bill of this kind to pass they never would have introduced it into the House in the shape it had assumed. He could not conceive that they would willingly undertake the responsibility of managing the country after the passage of the Bill. The Bill would unsettle everything and settle nothing. The noble Earl had talked of the risks their Lordships ran in throwing out the Bill, and the consequences which would follow to Ireland. Well, whatever those consequences might be, he did not think that it would be the throwing out of the Bill that would be responsible for them. It would not be the Nationalist Party in Ireland, because in taking the course they had done they had only played a move in their game — a move which might or might not be a wise one on their part. It was an action which might fairly have been expected of them; but he could not understand that Her Majesty's Government should willingly undertake, as he had said before, the responsibility which would devolve upon them if the Bill passed for what would then be the position of tenants who had taken farms. Did the Government for a moment imagine that the evicted tenants in that case would sit still and rest content and allow matters to take their course? Would they not consider their grievance tenfold greater because it would have been indirectly admitted by Parliament that they had a grievance. And were not their Lordships well aware of the methods to which they would be likely to resort in that case to enforce what they more than ever would consider to be their rights? There was a Member of Her Majesty's Government who would naturally support the measure on whose estate an outrage was recently committed. That, he thought, showed that the Irish peasantry had not forgotten those methods. This outrage was a very systematic one, and not an affair of the moment. It was not a sudden outburst. He had reason to know that the man who was at present in custody, and who would be tried for committing that offence, did not reside within many miles of the place where the outrage was attempted. He believed it was committed in the County of Cork, and that the man was resident in the centre of Kerry. Well, if under present circumstances, with the restraint which had, by some means or another, been put on these hill-side men such an outrage occurred when that restraint was withdrawn, would this be an isolated case? Did they not think that that example was likely to be followed, and that gentle hints would be given to these so-called land-grabbers to quit their holdings? Was not a temptation almost held out—because there was a provision in the Bill by which the evicted tenants were encouraged to bring forward their cases and to take steps to bring about amicable settlements. Well, if it appeared that a *primâ facie* case was made out against these unfortunate land-grabbers would not there be a double justification in the minds of these men for taking strong action to enforce their behests? But he had also to say that, while there were a large number no doubt of these evicted tenants who were interested personally in the passage of such a measure as this, there were a very large number who were not so interested. He believed that in many cases the last thing that the neighbouring tenants would like to see would be the return of many of these persons to their holdings. He believed also that, in addition to the people who had taken the evicted farms, there were their friends and relations to be considered. Everyone who understood the state of agricultural society in Ireland knew the wheels within wheels which existed, and how marriages, family arrangements, and other influences were brought to bear on these transactions. They knew how it would not only be the land-grabber who would have to quit his holding, and how it would perhaps be a daughter, or sister or some other near relative of some honest rent-paying neighbour who would also feel aggrieved by a relative being turned out on the world. Of course, there were some means contemplated of compensating the outgoing tenant, but everyone who knew the feeling which attached to occupancy amongst Irish tenants must know that that would be a very small consolation. Then, there was also the question of law-abiding, paying, tenants, and he was happy to say he knew a large number of them. What would be their feelings if they found that the evicted tenants obtained these advantages? Would they not in many cases feel that they were most unjustly treated, when they saw that they who had worked hard and paid their way and honestly met their obligations were having nothing done for them, but that all this special legislation was for people whom they knew to be little deserving of it? Therefore, it would not do to say that there were only so many hundreds of these so-called land-grabbers. The full effects of the Bill would extend far beyond them, and the measure would cause new difficulties and new troubles in addition to those with which they already had to cope. Then as to the method of dealing with this case. There was elaborate machinery in the Bill by which the Commissioners were to be first approached by the tenant; then the landlord was approached, and he had the alternative of insisting on the holding being bought, and so on. He observed that at the tail-end there was a provision by which the Commissioners, if they thought fit, could buy land elsewhere for evicted tenants. Well, would it not be a much shorter way of dealing with this question at once to face it by offering to buy these farms from the owners? The Government could then reinstate the tenants on their farms, and in that way avoid all this complicated machinery. Of course, in saying that he was not admitting the justice of the compulsory portion of the Bill, and he still thought that if even such a measure as that he indicated were adopted it would be most unjust to the landlord to go beyond voluntary powers. He could not see the justice of taking from a landlord against his will land into which he was put in possession by due process of law. In many cases the landlords holding that land instead of being a disadvantage to the public might be quite the reverse. It might be an advantage to the rest of his property, and he could not see any justice in taking it by force. As he had started by saying the evils of the Bill had been so thoroughly exposed by preceding speakers, he hardly thought he need say more. But he could not sit down without saying that if a reasonable, just, measure of a voluntary character could be brought forward which would deal fairly with this matter, he, for one, would certainly be delighted to support it. To do a great good he would be willing even to do a little wrong, but to do a great wrong for the sake of no good at all was quite another matter. He should certainly vote against the Bill as it stood, and in so doing would feel that he never gave a vote with a clearer consciousness that he was doing what was right and just.

*LORD RIBBLESDALE said, that up till now the speeches from the Opposition had teemed with objections to the Bill. The noble Duke (Duke of Argyll) told them that no one speech could exhaust the list of its demerits, but surely what one speech could not do a great many from the other side must have achieved. There had been a good many objections made to the Bill, some ingenious, some fanciful, and some very sound, practical, and arguable, but after all they resolved themselves into the question put to noble Lords opposite by Earl Spencer in moving the Second Reading—do you, or do you not, hold that the presence of these large bodies of evicted tenants in close proximity to their former holdings constitutes a social and administrative difficulty? If noble Lords opposite contended that no difficulty was thus created, or if they agreed with Mr. Chamberlain that the difficulty was quite insignificant, and might be dealt with by the 13th clause of the Act of 1891, then their attitude of negation with regard to, and their rejection of, the Bill would be quite logical; moreover, they would be accepting to the full the burden of responsibility and proof. But if they agreed with Mr. T. W. Russell and Mr. Courtney rather than with Colonel Saunderson, Mr. Chamberlain, and the Duke of Argyll, then the issue narrowed itself down to the particular means by which they desired to obtain a common end. He was afraid that there was no chance of their reading the Bill a second time, and equally he feared there was no chance of what the noble Marquess called on a former occasion "beneficent after-thoughts" being added to it by mutual arrangement in its later stages. Still, in the meantime, he would like to try and persuade them if he could that the Bill even as it stood was not so full of dire contingencies as some more active and sanguine opponents, and especially so the noble Duke, assumed at the time when he—well, he would not say fortified, but rhetorically embellished, his able speech by taking up what he called higher ground—that is, the philosophical and historical arguments against the Bill. Personally, he would try to shun extremes, and render their Lordships' reasons why the Bill as drawn was worthy a Second Reading, and worth, indeed, passing into law. At any rate, whatever view noble Lords opposite took of the Bill, the supporters of the Government recognised that a social difficulty did exist in connection with the evicted tenants, and that the delay which necessarily occurred in dealing with it last Session had in no wise diminished it. They had therefore appointed and equipped a tribunal with wide discretion and sterling credit to deal with it. The noble Duke had called it a revolutionary tribunal, but even Mr. Chamberlain had not gone so far as that in another place. He, indeed, was good enough to admit that the Arbitrators might be impartial, but only for the purposes of a "chopping at logic" argument — to the effect that the more impartial they were the less there would be for them to do — he compared three impartial Irishmen to three black swans, and suggested that an evicted tenant with a fair and deserving case for reinstatement was an animal as extinct as the Dodo. But the impartiality of the Arbitrators, which Mr. Chamberlain only conceded for the sake of argument, was, in the view of the Government, a cardinal feature of the measure, and a guarantee against injustice. What were the causes of complaint against the Bill? He would at once dismiss such ingenious and fanciful ones put forward by the noble Duke, and would come at once to the reasonable and practical arguments. The Government had been told by *The Times* and the Unionist Press that the Irish Members were their masters, and by the noble Duke that they were the servants of an Irish faction. Surely that was a ridiculous contention. Once the Bill was read a first time in the House of Lords, the noble Marquess opposite was, in a sense, their master by means of the majority behind him; he had Peers to the right of him and to the left of him; he had Peers behind him, and he was sorry to say he had Peers in front of him, all prepared to do his bidding, and to speak in support of any line he chose to advance upon. If, on the other hand, it was said that the Irish Members were the masters of the Government, in the sense that the Government had consulted and considered the views of the Representatives of the Irish people in regard to their legislation—and he, for one, did not know how far or how little they had been consulted—he could only say that he hoped they had been consulted. He could point to measures the success of which had been achieved through acting in concert with the Irish Members, and, as one instance, he might mention the Ashbourne Act of 1885. The noble Lord to whom the success of that Act was largely due was a most sympathetic member of a very sympathetic race; he always approached Irish questions with an enlightened appreciation, but it should not be forgotten that the great success of the Act was due to the fact that it was made a matter of friendly and proper negotiation between the Government and the Irish Members represented by Mr. Parnell. Again, there was the amending Statute of 1885 of the Act of 1883, which provided better accommodation for the labourers of Ireland, and gave Local Authorities compulsory powers to purchase land for cottages and gardens. That, too, was a matter of friendly arrangement and agreement. He might take higher ground, and say that the present peaceable condition of Ireland, which must be a source of satisfaction to noble Lords opposite, was attributable to the wish of the Government, as far as its Irish policy was concerned, to consult and consider the views and wishes of the Irish Members who represented the Irish people. As to the objection that there was no finality in the Bill, finality in legislation belonged to the same category as the Greek Kalends, and that was especially so in Ireland, where they had introduced a system of State intervention on behalf of an industry which depended on agricultural prices, and which, in these days of agricultural machinery, of new markets and trade routes, foreign competition, and even of improved cattle breeds, was liable to be completely transformed almost in the twinkling of an eye. Then they were met with the argument that they were setting a new precedent, and that that precedent would prove a dangerous one. That he denied. It was also suggested that they were following no precedent, but that reminded him of what occurred upon the first Committee of their Lordships' House, of which he had the honour to be a Member. A leading counsel was reminded that there was no precedent for the course he was suggesting, and he at once retorted with the statement that a well-known Chairman of Committees was in the habit of declaring that they sat to make and not to follow precedents. What they were doing in this instance neither added to nor took away from the many anomalies which had unfortunately distinguished Irish legislation for the last few years. That legislation was a history of gift, of compromise, and of composition, and he could remember a Debate in that House, some few years previously, in the course of which a noble Lord, the late Lord Fitzgerald, in giving his hearty support to the Arrears Bill, admitted that it would not stand economic tests. This, however, was the outcome of 80 or 100 years of mismanagement and mistakes. Now, however, he came to a formidable and highly debateable objection taken by the noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill, and taken also by the noble Duke. It was, in effect, that by the Bill they were whitewashing the Plan of Campaign; that they were indeed doing even worse, and offering it a premium, that they would demoralise the whole country, and that their action would lead to all sorts of moral and social disorder. He did not wish to go back and open up controversy and recrimination, or he might suggest that Parliament itself was possibly a little accountable for some of the Plan of Campaign cases, by delaying to do until 1887 that which it had been urged strongly to do in 1886. But he would prefer to look forward and not backward. In as far as the Bill would whitewash the Plan of Campaign, it had been anticipated by the 13th clause of the Land Purchase Act of 1891, under which, according to the Report of the

Mathew Commission, 74 evicted tenants, all stalwart campaigners on the Ponsonby estates, were reinstated as owners in their former holdings by means of purchase money advanced by the State. He did not wish to go into details as to the terms, but any one examining Mr. Balfour's Bill would see that a remarkable advantage was given to the purchasing evicted tenant as compared with that given to the sitting unevicted tenant on the same sort of holding. Let him take a hypothetical instance—say a case of a holding rented at £100 a year. An Evicted Plan of Campaign tenant on the Ponsonby estate would be allowed to buy, say, at 16 years' purchase if he did so. He only had to pay £64 a year interest and instalments, a betterment in his favour of £36 a year. He did not complain that noble Lords opposite were not right in passing such a clause, but he would ask why, if their action was right, the action of the present Government was wrong? The noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill said it would operate in a direction contrary to the maintenance of peace and security; but Mr. Carson had told them in another place that the existence of these evicted tenants constituted a question having grave reference to the peace of Ireland. Which view were they to take? He preferred Mr. Carson's. Now he came to a much ridden "cheval de bataille." The 13th clause of the Act of 1891 re-instated the evicted tenants as purchasers of their former holdings, the purchase money being advanced by the Imperial Exchequer.

THE MARQUESS OF **SALISBURY**: They were re-instated with the consent of the landlord.

*LORD **RIBBLESDALE** said, that was so. What was the Land Purchase Bill of 1891? It was a Bill of very large scope; 33 millions sterling was the sum involved, and it was apparently advanced at the risk of the Imperial Exchequer, with the British taxpayer behind it. But, as a matter of fact, the British taxpayer was secured by a local guarantee in Ireland. Was that a voluntary guarantee? No; that guarantee was an absolutely compulsory one. Under that Act the Irish ratepayer became what they called in Yorkshire the bondsman of the purchasing tenant, but his assent to the transaction was not asked; he backed a Bill he had never seen the face of. Noble Lords would remember that the necessary security was provided by a compulsory hypothecation of local resources and of Imperial contributions to Ireland for education, pauper lunatics, and similar purposes. And in addition to that the Lord Lieutenant was granted power to levy rates on a defaulting district without the consent of the ratepayers. Thus the principle of compulsion was found underlying the whole Act of 1891 as it affected Land Purchase. The noble Lord (Lord Balfour) laid great stress on the importance of both parties to a bargain being consulted, but in this case the Local Bodies whose moneys were hypothecated were not consulted at all. He held there was very little to choose in principle between compulsion applied to land purchase in this way and compulsion applied to the re-instatement of the evicted tenant. "Compulsion" was no doubt as uncomfortable a word to the politician as the noble Marquess said "evolution" was comfortable to the man of science. But surely there was a little exaggeration in the view taken of compulsion by the Opposition. To listen to the speeches which had been delivered one would imagine that the Bill was compulsion all round, that the Arbitrators must arbitrate, that the former tenant must petition, that the new tenant must refuse all terms of adjustment, and that the landlord must show himself obstinate and stiff-necked to all temptations to compromise of any sort. The question had indeed been argued as if the word "may" in the Act had in every case been transformed into "must" or "shall." He might, however, point out that this was a Bill, as it affected landlords, which was drafted not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Under it he did not believe that any landlord who had behaved with consideration or with mercy tempered with justice in regard to his tenants, as many had, had anything to fear, nor could he think that any thriftless or insolvent tenant had anything to expect, or had any claim to indulgence under the Bill. Mr. T. W. Russell, who spoke with great authority on this subject, had declared that under a voluntary measure 80 per cent. of the cases, to deal with which this measure had been brought in, would be settled out of Court by arrangement. What was to prevent that now? He did not think the landlords would be so wrong-headed and foolish as he understood Irish tenants had been in turning their backs on the benefits of legislation because of a point of honour. On the contrary, he believed that the fact of the Bill being compulsory would encourage voluntary settlements; people quickly developed an aptitude for avoiding litigation and delay, and strenuous and sincere opposition to a Bill usually meant self-adaptation to an Act. But admitting that the view of Mr. Russell was correct, there would, under a voluntary measure, remain a residue of cases for which no provision would be made. What was to become of this unlucky residue, and might it not consist of the very people whose cases ought to be met, men not unwilling to come to terms, but unable, and the fault lying at the landlords' door? The noble Marquess (Lord Lansdowne), who was to follow him in the Debate, always spoke with great ability and moderation in that House, and was admittedly a high authority on Irish land questions. He supported the compulsory principle of the Arrears Bill of 1882. Speaking on July 27 in that year he pointed out that the optional clauses as to arrears of the Bill of 1881 had failed because they were optional, and that in the then sore and irritated state of relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland they could not but fail, and then he went on to point out that the compulsory clauses of the Bill of 1882 were valuable to the Irish landlord because they would prevent his attitude towards his tenantry from being misrepresented and traduced. Lord Selborne in the same Debate held very much the same language. He fully recognised troubles and perplexities which the Irish landlords had had to face, and the excellent spirit with which, as a body, they had dealt with them. Of course, harsh, unreasonable, and stupid landlords were found in all countries. In Ireland, as in 1844 Lord Normanby pointed out, with a monopoly of the means of existence the landlord had a power which did not exist elsewhere—namely, the power of starvation. Declarations of that kind, however, were no longer made, such things could no longer be asserted with any justice, and the rapacious landlords were in a miserable minority. But still there must be in Ireland, as elsewhere, a few harsh, unreasonable, and obstinate landlords. He did not think anybody would dispute that, and Mr. Chamberlain even had admitted the possibility that there might be cases of gross injustice and hardship, and if there were such among the 20 per cent. of cases which were not likely to be voluntarily arranged, surely that was sufficient to justify the inclusion of the compulsory principle in the Bill. Indeed, it seemed to him that its omission would jeopardise its object and operation. He did not wish to detain the House at greater length. He would point out that land was life in Ireland, and that the possession of it meant to the peasantry the difference between starvation and existence. Landlords had a monopoly of the only article of consumption which the Irish peasant depended upon for his every-day life. Their Lordships could not speak about a free contract between the owner of land and the man who wanted land in Ireland any more than he could speak about free contract between, say, the Great Western Railway Company and a passenger when he wished to travel. But, in the case of the railway, Parliament protected the traveller in the same way as in the case of gas and water it protected the consumer, and this consideration might be advanced as a plea for the legislation which Parliament recommended to be adopted in Ireland in 1881. Whatever course their Lordships took, the attachment of the Irish tenant to the soil would remain undiminished; they could not evict a feeling, and he did not think that in their consideration of questions affecting the agrarian future of Ireland their Lordships could leave those sentimental considerations entirely aside. The Bill had been attacked on the ground that it was a political proposal. He was aware that this phrase was supposed to carry a sharp sting in its tail; but if a political proposal meant that it was an honest attempt to do something for the welfare of society, whether in Ireland or anywhere else, then he said that he welcomed a political proposal, and as such he supported the Second Reading of the Bill without hesitation, and he wished that he could persuade their Lordships to do the same.

***The Marquess of LANSDOWNE**: This Bill has been recommended to the House by the noble Lords who have supported it as a measure of healing, as the reparation of a great wrong, and as likely to bring back peace where discord at present prevails. If I were inclined to use a captious argument, I would say that we have heard that sort of thing before. It reminds me of the words of a well-known character in one of Sir Walter Scott's novels—

> "These truces with the infidels make an old man of me. I remember three, and each of them was to last for 50 years."

We can remember more than three truces with the clients of the noble Lords who sit behind me, and they were to last, not for 50 years, but were represented as a final settlement. I do not, however, wish to press that argument. I rather agree with the last speaker in believing that finality in these matters is somewhat difficult of attainment, and I will take it upon myself as an Irish landlord to say that, if we could really see our way to facilitate a reasonable settlement of this long-standing difficulty, I and others would be ready to assist to the best of our ability; and, in making that attempt, we would certainly not be too pedantic in regard to the principles on which we might insist, or be too much inclined to scrutinize jealously the terms which might be embodied in any proposal before the House. But what we complain of is that we are placed in the position of having to choose between the rejection of a measure which is proffered to us in the interests of humanity and the acceptance of proposals which we sincerely believe to be, both in principle and procedure, some of the most dangerous which has ever been submitted to Parliament. I say that, assuming that I am right in believing that the Bill before the House is in its essence a compulsory measure. It is to that principle of compulsion our main objection applies. I make no doubt your Lordships did not fail to notice the fly thrown over to us by the noble Earl who moved the Second Reading of the Bill. I understood him, in the course of his opening speech, to say that although he himself believed a compulsory Bill was essential, he thought much good might be done by a voluntary measure; and then he added that it was open to the House of Lords to remodel the Bill, although, I think, the noble Earl said he deprecated such a course.

Earl SPENCER: I said that a voluntary settlement might do a great deal towards settling this question on one condition—namely, were we assured that both parties to the contest would try loyally to carry it out.

***The Marquess of LANSDOWNE**: If that offer was intended by the noble Earl as a holding out of the olive branch I must say that I never saw an olive branch held out in such a timid or half-hearted manner. I do not profess to have a knowledge of draftsmanship, but it seems to me, after reading the Bill, that it would be altogether beyond the power of your Lordships to convert it, at this stage, from a compulsory into a voluntary measure. The Bill is structurally a compulsory Bill from beginning to end. There was, I remember, a popular caricature in which three British tourists were depicted inspecting Wallenstein's horse, which had been stuffed for exhibition to the public. The show-woman says to them, "The head and neck and legs and part of the body have been restored, but all the rest is the real horse." That is the kind of remodelling this Bill would have to undergo if we are to rise to the noble Earl's fly, and to endeavour to transmogrify it in Committee. Speaking entirely for myself, I say that I am ready to accept the noble Earl's challenge, and I will suggest to the noble Earl that, if he is really in earnest in his proposal, let him bring forward in black and white the Amendments which he is ready to propose or to accept from others. We shall then see if anything can be made of them. But for your Lordships to take upon yourselves the task of remodelling this Bill seems to me to be an altogether dangerous and improper proceeding on your part. In making that proposal it seems to me that the noble Earl was endeavouring to lure your Lordships away from the sound ground on which you are now standing to much more treacherous ground on which the real issues of the conflict would probably be entirely lost sight of. Before leaving the question of compulsion I must notice what has been said by the last speaker with reference to the discussion on the Arrears Act. The noble Lord reminded me that in that Debate I not only accepted the principle of compulsion, but expressed myself favourable towards it. I ask the noble Lord not to imagine that I am opposed to compulsion in every case. There are certain cases in which compulsion may clearly be indispensable. In the case of the Arrears Act we had to deal with a large number of poor tenants in Ireland in extremely embarrassed circumstances, to whom it was necessary that some relief should be given if they were not to lose their holdings. Does the noble Lord mean to contend for one moment that to offer relief to those tenants to save them from eviction was the same thing as to use compulsion for the purpose of imposing on a landlord, and of compelling him to take back on his land a body of tenants who have joined in a conspiracy which has been denounced as immoral by the Church and stigmatised as illegal by the highest legal authority? The case is entirely different. The House has, it seems to me, to consider, first, what are the dimensions of the emergency with which we have to deal; and, secondly, whether the proposals of the Government are really effectual to deal successfully with that emergency. Attention has already been called by more than one speaker to the apparent discrepancies between the number of tenants to whom it is expected that this Bill will give relief. The total number of tenants to whom the Bill applies is unquestionably very large indeed. There is no doubt about that, because the Government have found themselves compelled to re-christen their Bill, and its present scope is much wider than anyone originally supposed. I will, however, take the number of tenants at 4,000, the number given by the Representatives of Her Majesty's Government; that number represents only 1 per cent. of the 400,000 who are to be found in the whole of Ireland. It represents, too, the evictions of 15 years, during which agriculture in Ireland has undergone the severest trials to which probably it has ever been subjected. Some of the evicted men are no doubt worthy of compassion, but I venture to assert that the dimensions of the emergency have been tremendously exaggerated. The Bill is really designed, not for the relief of the larger body of evicted tenants, but for the relief of the smaller number who are connected with the Plan of Campaign estates. The number of these was stated by the Mathew Commission to be between 800 and 900. The noble Lord who introduced the Bill repudiated the idea that the measure was intended for the Plan of Campaign tenants. But can he say that but for those tenants this Bill would ever have seen the light? Many deductions must, however, be made from the total in order to find the actual number of tenants who would be relieved by the Bill, and who could not be relieved by other means. There are, in the first place, those whom the tribunal would set aside as ineligible; men whose conduct and antecedents would not entitle them to relief. Then we must deduct those whose holdings have passed into the hands of *bonâ fide* new tenants, whom the Bill gives no power to dispossess; and, finally, there are those who would obtain relief by private settlement. That last class has alone been estimated at 80 per cent. of the whole; and therefore, after these deductions have been made, the total is made so infinitesimally small as to be altogether out of proportion to the magnitude and gravity of the proposals in the Bill. The difficulty is, in fact, political rather than administrative. It is felt, not on the Irish land, but in the Lobbies of the House of Commons, and this Bill has been produced, and is the price we are asked to pay in order to extricate the Government from its difficulty. It seems to me that of all the objectionable features of the Bill none is more objectionable than the proposal that Parliament shall shirk and transfer to an irresponsible tribunal a duty which properly belongs to itself. I am all for lightening the work of Parliament where it can be done by means of Commissions and Committees, but it is a very serious thing indeed to hand over to a tribunal of this kind the decision of great issues, affecting the public morality and the safety of the United Kingdom, without a single word of guidance as to how the powers conferred are to be exercised. Look at the extraordinary vagueness of the language by which the Arbitrators are directed to act, in deciding whether there is a *primâ facie* case for reinstatement. They are to consider the circumstance of the district, and the circumstances under which the determination of the tenancy took place. There is not a word to show whether those circumstances are to be agricultural, climatic, or political. And, as if that were not sufficiently vague, the Court is to consider—

> "If there is not some other cause appearing to them sufficient to justify the reinstatement of the tenant."

I honestly believe that there never has been a case of reference to a tribunal in language so dangerously vague. Again, supposing the Arbitrators came to the conclusion that a *primâ facie* case had been made out, the parties are to be allowed to appear and to show that there has been unreasonableness on one side or the other. What does the inquiry into the "reasonableness" of the parties mean? It means that the whole of the history of these intricate cases is to be ripped up by the tribunal, the antecedents of both landlord and tenant are to be inquired into, the management of the estate is to be scrutinised, and the whole of the negotiations between landlord and tenant to be investigated. If it does not do all this, the tribunal will scamp its work and perform it in an unsatisfactory and perfunctory manner. And then, when the facts have been ascertained, what is the criterion of reasonableness to be? Different people will clearly take entirely different views; and the test applied by the tribunal will be a purely political test wholly without regard to the intrinsic merits of the case. One most important hint was given by the Chief Secretary when he announced that in all probability the cases would be dealt with in groups; and we must also note that indiscreet supporters of the Government have intimated that those tenants who have been able to pay their rents but who had refused are, on the whole, objects of admiration. If that is true, what will be the result? It follows that the tribunal will not go fully into the cases. They will be dealt with in wholesale fashion. The dupes and the knaves, the solvent and the insolvent, the thrifty and the ne'er-do-weels, will all have the same undiscriminating treatment meted out to them. But if, on the other hand, proper discrimination is exercised, then many of the applicants must be disappointed, and so that which is intended as a settlement will only bring vexation and disappointment. If the tribunal does its duty the insolvent and broken-down tenants must be excluded. Noble Lords sometimes speak as if bad and improvident farmers are never to be found in Ireland, but only in other parts of the United Kingdom; but that is not the case, and I think I am warranted in saying that that class is likely to form a large proportion of the tenants who have refused to pay their rents. The Plan of Campaign has had an irresistible attraction for that class of tenant. It gave them an opportunity of extricating themselves and refusing to fulfil their obligations. Persons of this sort will, therefore, be numerously represented among the applicants. Under the Bill they are to get £50 for the repair of buildings; but there is no grant for restocking the land, though such a grant to be secured by the rates was recommended by the Mathew Commission. That proposal, however, was one which the Government had no taste for. The consequence will be that we shall under the Bill have an ill-starred union of broken-down tenants and derelict farms. The condition of these is forcibly described in the Report of the Mathew Commission. The present condition of the farms, that Report states, is deplorable. The land has gone to waste, fields which, when cultivated, were thoroughly productive are now covered with furze and weeds, while tracts reclaimed by the industrious tenant from bog or mountain are returning to their original condition. That is the kind of holding to which these men will be restored if this tribunal comes into existence, and is lax in its interpretation of its duties. But if the tribunal is strict and conscientious, these men will get no relief, and the sore will remain unhealed. I see no escape from the dilemma. Then there is another class which will be left out in the cold, those who have seen their farms occupied by, some bought by, *bonâ fide* new tenants—commonly called "planters." These men, I venture to say, deserve all the countenance and protection which Parliament can give them. They are men who have shown that they possess that quality of self-reliance which is too often absent in the Irish peasant, and it is altogether an exaggeration to describe them as they are frequently described, as merely men of straw. I have some personal knowledge of these cases, of which a considerable number is to be found on an estate which has gained a certain amount of notoriety in connection with this dispute, and I am able to tell your Lordships that the planter tenants on that estate are far from being mere men of straw. They are men who are firmly established upon their holdings, who are thriving upon them, who have paid their rents—rents about equal to those which their predecessors refused to pay—and met their obligations with punctuality, and who are by no means men who are likely to readily abandon the farms which they now possess. The strongest proof of their *bona fides* is, I think, to be found in the fact that most of them have purchased their farms, for before they were allowed to do that their cases were inquired into by the Land Commission, who satisfied themselves that each applicant was a fit subject to purchase, and that he had punctually paid his rates and taxes before he was admitted to purchase. Now, my Lords, what I wish to impress on this House is that in the case of the tenants whose farms have been occupied by planters of this description the Bill can give no relief; their holdings are gone, and are not likely to be restored to them. If the planter sits fast, the former tenant can have no hope of being reinstated. Then there will arise this anomaly: You will have cases where a comparatively deserving former tenant finds himself excluded because his farm is occupied by a planter, and you have other cases in which a comparatively undeserving man will be reinstated because the farm is still in his landlord's hands. That is an argument which weighs very much with me, because the tenants on the estate to which I referred just now are men to whom I confess I should be glad to see relief given were it still possible to give it. They are men, the main body of whom, at all events, certainly deserve to be classed amongst those who were duped and intimidated into the folly which has led them to lose their holdings. It would not be proper that I should detain the House with a personal matter of this kind, but I cannot help doing so, in order to make good what I have said. I should like to read a short and significant extract from the evidence before the Mathew Commission. One of the local leaders of these tenants was the curate of Luggacurren, who was one of the witnesses examined, and this gentleman was asked—

> "When did you become curate of Luggacurren?" and he replied "I became curate in 1886."
>
> "Had you been in the neighbourhood before that; had you been stationed in the parish?" "No, sir."
>
> "Were you present at the meeting at which the tenants adopted the Plan of Campaign?" "No, sir."
>
> "Did you take any steps to inform yourself as to the rents?" "I did not, sir."

And yet it was under the guidance and leadership such as this that these unfortunate men entered into a foolish and unequal contest. I confess I should have been very glad if it had been possible to open a door through which they might find relief; and in order to show that this is not an idle profession on my part, I might mention that in 1891 nine of these tenants were actually reinstated on payment of two years' rent, which is somewhere about the amount required in the Bill before you. But it is now too late for the rest to expect reinstatement, and in their cases, at all events, the Bill will not afford the relief which is expected from it. Now, we have been warned that the failure of the Bill in this respect will prevent its being accepted by the tenants of Ireland. I do not know whether your attention has been directed to a statement made recently in the other House by Mr. J. Redmond, in which he said that if the Bill applied to all classes of tenants, that fact would go a long way to assist the Chief Secretary in preserving peace in Ireland; but that if the Bill passed in a defective condition as to exclude the cases in which the former tenants had been replaced by planters, which cases, he said, "lay at the very centre of the trouble," then he thought the prospects of preserving peace would be much more grave than they would have been even if we were to go the length of evicting the new tenants. I believe that, if in your Lordships' opinion anything like a general reinstatement of the evicted tenants is a condition precedent to the restoration of peace, it would be better to have a wholesale and indiscriminate reinstatement upon liberal terms of compensation than the futile, unnecessary, and abortive attempt at discrimination contained in the Bill as it now stands. But, my Lords, the anomalies and the injustice which will be done to individuals are nothing compared to the disastrous effects which this Bill will produce on Irish society generally. It will produce a shock to public confidence in the authority of law such as has never been paralleled. Who in Ireland will ever trust our word again if we do this thing? The landlords have seen one inroad after another made on their property. They have seen the confiscation of rights which the law had recognised—contracts broken, and judicial rents which they had believed to be sacred modified at the first provocation; and now in this case, after they have been driven by a conspiracy of the most dangerous kind into vast expense, after they have been harassed by prolonged litigation, after they have been subject to abuse and obloquy of every kind, when at last they have reconquered their own and asserted the rights which the law still left to them, they find themselves liable to be ousted at the bidding of the Irish allies of Her Majesty's Government. How often during the Debates on the Land Bill of 1881 were we told that, if our rights were curtailed, we should at least be left secure in the enjoyment of those which the law still left us? Are we not excusable if we ask whether there is, in the opinion of the Government, any point at which Irish landlords may, with a clear conscience, and with the certainty that they will not be thrown over, enforce the rights which the law of their country confers upon them? Then consider the effect of this legislation upon the honest tenants who have punctually met their obligations. The First Lord of the Admiralty knows Ireland well enough to be aware at what risk these people isolated themselves from their neighbours and met their obligations when they were ordered not to do so. He knows the risk they ran to their own lives and to the safety of their families. What will be the feeling of these men when, after having had the courage of their opinions, they see their less honest neighbours reinstated—restored in triumph to their holdings, with flags flying and drums beating, and a grant from the Irish Church surplus to enable them to rebuild their homes? Will not they ask themselves, "If ever the hour of trial comes again, will it be worth while to stand aside; will it not be better for us to throw in our lot with the rest? Another result will follow. If this Bill passes, who will ever in Ireland dare to take an acre of evicted land again? This is a very important matter, because, as has been said here and elsewhere, eviction is, after all, in Ireland and elsewhere, the *ultima ratio*. I find that the other day the Leader of this House indulged in a little eviction of his own, and I have no doubt he was perfectly justified in his action. Evictions must take place, if the payment of rent is not to become optional on the tenant's part. But what this legislation means is that in future if a landlord gets rid of his tenant he will have to hold the land himself, and that nobody else will be so foolish as to rent it. Consider, again, what the effect of such legislation will be on the dishonest section of the community: will they not understand that no conspiracy is so dark that it may not be taken part in with impunity? Will they not realise that no conduct is so extravagant but that Parliament will step in and condone it; that no game is so dangerous that you cannot play it with safety if you only play it long enough? These people will be taught that it is safe for them to plunge deeper and deeper into the morass of agitation, because in the end they may be sure that Parliament will come to the rescue and extricate them? The proverb used to run that if you make your bed you must lie on it. These people will be taught that, however they may make their beds, somebody else will have to lie on it—the landlord, or their neighbours, or the taxpayers of this country. There is another incidental result of the Bill of which I would like to say a word. What will be the effect of it on the prospect of land purchase in Ireland? I have always been a firm believer in purchase as the solution of the Irish land difficulty. I remember that, immediately on the Report of the Bessborough Commission, I expressed publicly my belief that if dual ownership of the kind suggested were to be adopted only one solution was possible—namely, by means of purchase, which would, in effect, place the tenant in the position of being sole owner of the land. I think we ought to watch the question of purchase carefully, because, after all, it is the one solitary success which we have achieved amidst a whole wilderness of failures. Upon the millions advanced to the tenants there is hardly a shilling of bad debt. That is because the purchasers have been selected in the most careful manner; there has, in the first place, been a process of natural selection, because the operation has been confined to those who have been thrifty and self-reliant, and who were not afraid to place themselves in the position of tenants to the State, instead of to private individuals. A further process of selection has taken place through the agency of the Land Commissioners, who have rejected all but those who were thoroughly fitted to own their farms. You have therefore among these tenants got a sort of *corps d'élite* of the tenantry of Ireland. But under this Bill you are going to assist a body of men which will probably contain an exceptionally large number of the most thriftless, turbulent, and unimproving class. I cannot conceive any action more likely to discredit the prospects of land purchase in Ireland than the passage of such a Bill as that upon the Table. I will summarise in half-a-dozen words my objections to the measure. I believe that the Government has from the first greatly over-estimated the extent of the administrative difficulty with which they have to deal. I believe no Bill, whether voluntary or compulsory, will remove that administrative difficulty entirely. There must be in either case a certain residuum of tenants to whom it will not afford relief, and I very much suspect that that residuum would not be any larger in the case of a voluntary measure than it would be in the case of a compulsory measure, because, while a compulsory measure would be carried out reluctantly, a voluntary measure would receive every facility from the landlords. I believe, further, that if the measure were perfect and the tribunal which was to carry it out was the incarnation of prudence, such interference would be full of danger; but to give the powers contained in the Bill to such a tribunal as that constituted under it seems to me a disastrous abrogation of the proper functions of Parliament. If, however, Her Majesty's Ministers, who are responsible, are so cowed and dismayed by the administrative difficulty that they feel themselves unequal to carrying on the government of the country without some settlement of it, then I say we would gladly have accepted a voluntary Bill, and should have done our best to make it a success. It has been said that a single perverse landlord could make a voluntary Bill a failure, but I have shown that under the Bill as it stands a single obstinate planter tenant can make it a failure? We have been threatened with the consequences that will arise if the Bill is rejected. There is a point at which these predictions approach perilously near to suggestion, and I trust that that consideration will not be lost sight of. But if the rejection of the Bill should have the effect of leading to some recrudescence of the wickedness and folly of the last few years, I believe that the result will be less disastrous in the end than the consequences of such a surrender to the forces of disorder as that which is advocated in this Bill. Be this as it may, if trouble arises the blame will lie not with us who have disappointed these expectations, but with you who have raised them. Your Lordships' action will no doubt be misrepresented, as it has been on former occasions, but we may find some consolation in the reflection that the people of this country were beginning to understand the Irish land question better than they did. They are beginning to realise, amongst other things, that the Irish tenant farmer, instead of being the most oppressed and downtrodden of the cultivators of the soil, enjoys privileges and advantages which are not shared by any occupant of land in any part of the globe. If he neglects his opportunities and declines to avail himself of these privileges and advantages, either from weakness or contumacy, or from the guidance of bad and disloyal advisers, then to say that we ought to apply legislative compulsion for the purpose of extricating him, either at the cost of the creditor whom he has defrauded or the neighbours whom he has endeavoured to lead astray, or the taxpayers of this country, whom he has already involved in great trouble and expense, is an outrage upon common sense and a fraud upon the whole community.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY said, that like no doubt a large number of the noble Members of that House, he had been a strong believer in the old adage that there was nothing new under the sun; but for the last few hours he had been speculating whether there had ever been such a complete instance of absolute inconsistency in any former probable proposition as was instanced by the noble Earl who introduced this measure. In September last he introduced a measure which had for its object the separation of Ireland from England—he who had before been the strongest and staunchest of Unionists. Now they saw the noble Earl introducing a measure for no other object than to benefit a body of political agitators, some of whom he had imprisoned without trial. The noble Earl had not formulated a single valid argument in favour of the measure before them; he supposed because none was possible. He could show, perhaps, on what lines the argument would be based that they sympathised a good deal with the evicted tenants, and they had to maintain themselves in office. They must conciliate the leaders of the agitation, and to do that they must reinstate them in the minds of their unfortunate dupes. It was nothing more nor less than that. He thought if that argument had been put forward it might have prevailed somewhat, but the argument which was put forward could not prevail at all. He could not but think that in introducing the Bill the noble Earl had not realised the magnitude of the measure he was submitting to them. In the first place, it was proposed to take £250,000 of State money, to which an Irish fund was to be added known by the name of the Paris Fund, to found what was neither more or less than a Political Fund to benefit those who were called the wounded soldiers of the Plan of Campaign, which was nothing more than one of the methods of agrarian outrage. What the noble Earl really proposed to do was to take State money for the purpose of separating England and Ireland. He maintained, on these grounds alone, that their Lordships would be absolutely inconsistent, and would falsify their action in September last in rejecting the Home Rule Bill if they did not reject this measure. The noble Lords opposite knew full well that they could not challenge the rejection in September last; and if they went to the country they would not dare to challenge them on this measure. For his own part, he objected to the Bill for many reasons. In the first place, he objected to the main principle which advocated a repudiation of debt and of legal contract. It might be said that this measure only applied to Ireland, but he did not think for a moment that its influence would be restricted to Ireland; and if they passed a measure repudiating debt in Ireland, he believed that at no distant period an attempt would be made to apply a similar principle to England, and what would result?—the whole of the great trade interest of this country would be affected. They knew their great commercial interest was based upon the fact that contract was acknowledged, and they did not repudiate their debts; but the Government were now inaugurating a measure which had for its purpose not only the repudiation of debt, but the legalisation of the repudiation of debt, and the reward of persons who repudiated their debts and broke their contracts. More than that, he maintained that the measure proposed by the noble Earl was a direct attack on the foundations of social order. The law was always allowed to be among all classes stronger than any individual or body of individuals; it was recognised as having been made for the whole community, and that it was no less the interest than the duty of the community to obey the law as against individuals. That was always allowed until it broke down. This was a measure that proved that a small body of men could break the law with impunity, and it also proved that not only might law-breakers be rewarded, but that those who had obeyed the law would suffer. He did not think it would be denied that this measure was introduced to benefit the victims of the Plan of Campaign. Of that there could be no doubt whatever, because when the present Government were in power from 1880 to 1886 they proposed no such Bill for the reinstatement of evicted tenants. He would ask them why they did not bring in a measure then? Why? Because they did not see the necessity for it; but now that pressure had been brought to bear upon them they brought in this measure. The tenantry on the estates on which the Plan of Campaign fastened were not ill-used, or rack-rented, or over-rented at all. Lord Clanricarde had often been denounced as a harsh landlord; but his estate was really very low-rented, as was proved by the fact that very few tenants took advantage of the fair-rent clauses of the Land Act. The Luggacurren estate was another property that was certainly not over-rented, and one of the evicted tenants there admitted he could pay his rent. It was a fight of intelligence against intelligence he said, and the same statement applied with equal truth to the Smith-Barry, the Massereene, and the Ponsonby estates. The Plan of Campaign was, in fact, established on these properties not because the tenants were hardly used, but as "a political engine," to quote the words of a Nationalist Member. Having failed to benefit the unfortunate dupes who embraced the Plan of Campaign, the leaders of the Nationalist Party now sought to reinstate them, with the help of the Government, in order that they might not be discouraged from taking part in future land agitations. The money collected under the Plan of Campaign was banked in the name of the leaders of the agitation, who had no right whatever to it. The miscellaneous expenditure incurred, including travelling expenses, amounted, according to Mr. Dillon, to £17,035, and this sum had never been properly accounted for. He should be the last to make a charge against any man; but he maintained that if any public business man was asked whether £17,000 was not a large sum to be accounted for, he would say it was. Unless Mr. Dillon and the trustees of the Plan of Campaign could say how it had been spent, he maintained that the tenants who were the dupes of these men had a perfect right to put any construction they chose on the manner in which that money had been expended. Though the enforcement of the Plan of Campaign had been most vigorously and steadily carried out by Mr. Dillon and the rest of the Nationalist Party, he was glad to think that a great number of honest tenants on the Plan of Campaign estates had insisted on paying their just debts and paying what was due to their landlords under great and serious difficulties. He found, on turning to the Parnell Commission, a statement to show that. He confessed that he heard with sorrow the noble Earl (Spencer) sneer at the Irish landlords. The noble Earl should have remembered that the Irish landlords were his truest friends at a time when he was discharging arduous duties in Ireland. When he heard the noble Earl sneering at Irish landlords because of the absolute necessity they had been under to evict, he could not refrain from calling the noble Earl's attention to a newspaper extract which stated that the noble Earl had evicted tenants at Wimbledon.

EARL SPENCER: The noble Marquess is giving me some news I am not aware of.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Will the noble Earl contradict the remark?

*EARL SPENCER: I never heard of any eviction there; I have hardly any tenants at all at Wimbledon.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY said, he would not then refer to the paper. He was aware that no better landlord than the noble Earl existed in England, but he asked that the noble Earl and his colleagues should give the same credit to Irish landlords as they did to the Prime Minister. The noble Earl stated that he disapproved the Plan of Campaign, which had been forced on the unfortunate tenants by terrorism. But the noble Earl did not denounce that organisation, though he must have been aware of the harm it caused; and other members of his Party had gone so far as to put forward extenuating circumstances in its favour. Mr. Parnell's Bill would have embraced only a tithe of the tenants who were forced into the embrace of the Plan of Campaign. Mr. Parnell's Bill dealt only with leaseholders and judicial tenants whose rents had been fixed before September, 1884. A few statistics would show the small extent to which that Bill, if carried, would have affected the Plan of Campaign estates. On those estates there were 1,800 tenants, of whom 150 were judicial and 150 leaseholders. Therefore, Mr. Parnell's Bill did not apply to 1,500 out of the 1,800 tenants on the Plan of Campaign estates. On the Luggacurren estate there were 31 tenants evicted, of whom hardly one was a judicial tenant or a leaseholder. On the Coolgreany estate there were 114 tenants—15 judicial tenants and 22 leaseholders; and therefore there were 77 tenants who were unaffected by Mr. Parnell's Bill. On the Massereene estate there were 327 tenants—90 judicial and 20 leaseholders, leaving 217 tenants who were unaffected by Mr. Parnell's Bill. On the Vandeleur estate there were 24 tenants evicted, 12 of whom were non-judicial, and therefore 12 were unaffected by Mr. Parnell's Bill. He could quote many other instances to show that Mr. Parnell's Bill would have embraced only a tithe of the tenants who were forced into the Plan of Campaign. But that was not all. The landlords had offered better terms to the Plan of Campaign tenants than they would have got under Mr. Parnell's Bill. Under that Bill the tenants were to pay 50 per cent. of the arrears, and reserve the remainder until the rents fixed between 1881 and the 31st December, 1884, had been revised. But numbers of landlords of Plan of Campaign estates had offered to take half a year's rent in settlement of all arrears. Why had not those terms been accepted? Why was not Clause 13 of the Act of 1891 taken advantage of? Simply because the promoters of the Plan of Campaign were determined that there should be no settlement between landlord and tenant, and it was their main object to keep the evicted farms derelict, if possible. Mr. Dillon, speaking in Galway, said—

> "We organised a system of keeping evicted farms unoccupied, and it was the greatest weapon ever placed in the hands of the Irish people. Long may it be before the Irish people forget that lesson!"

Could their Lordships wonder now why Section 13 of the Act of 1891 had not been taken advantage of, and why all the efforts of the landlords who had done everything in their power to effect settlements had come to nothing? The reason was that the men who had declared that they held the present Government in the hollow of their hand were determined that no settlement should be arrived at; and now that the evicted tenants saw their folly, this measure was brought forward simply because the political agitators wished to reinstate themselves in the minds of their unfortunate dupes. The most important part of the measure was that referring to the new tenants. The English people would never allow the men who had exercised their absolute right to occupy vacant farms, and who had sunk in those farms their capital and industry, to be evicted. It was the fashion to speak of these tenants as bogus tenants. Mr. Shaw-Lefevre had so referred to them during a tour he made in Ireland in aid of the abettors of the Plan of Campaign. It would have been better if the right hon. Gentleman had had the courage to repeat that statement in the House of Commons, where he could be answered. But evidently Mr. Shaw-Lefevre was one of those gentlemen who thought discretion to be the better part of valour, for the Bill went through the House of Commons without a word from him, except in the form of a correction to another speaker, as to whether or not he had been under police protection while in Ireland. He himself had taken considerable trouble to find out the position of the new tenants. He had learned from Mr. Lloyd, the agent of the Massereene estate, that the capital necessary to work the holdings of 29 new tenants on that estate was no less than £12,200; while the probable amount that the tenants would require as compensation for disturbance would be £23,300. Therefore, on the Massereene estate alone £35,000 out of the sum allotted in the Bill would be required—that was out of the £250,000 which the noble Earl in introducing the Bill said would be amply sufficient for all the requirements. Mr. Dillon had referred to the new tenants as humbugs and impostors, and declared that £200 or £300 well spent would get rid of the whole crew. He asked the noble Earl opposite if he endorsed that statement? If he did, then he should give it the flattest contradiction in his power. He had had letters from a number of new tenants on the Massereene estate, on which alone the value of the new tenant properties was £35,000. Andrew Wilson, a large tenant, wrote that his rent was £90 a year, and that he was £50 better off than 12 months ago, notwithstanding boycotting. Andrew Hodge, a small tenant, who took a farm that was in a very neglected state, consisting of 38 acres, at a rent of £30, cleared £60 last year, notwithstanding boycotting, and was spending £10 a year on permanent improvements. He was aware of another case where the new tenant would not take less than £1,000 for the goodwill. These tenants appealed to their Lordships to reject this Bill, which would cause them great disappointment and loss of property. They were not bogus tenants; they were *boná fide* tenants, who had worked their farms, and who had as much right to them as he had to the coat on his back. If the Bill passed, what would be the future position of these men? It was said that the Bill brought no compulsion to bear upon them, and that they could not be turned out of their holdings. There was talk of moral compulsion, but their Lordships knew what moral compulsion was in Ireland, and when there was a bribe held out in the shape of money to the evicted tenants, that would not make the lives of the new tenants—men who were in the possession of property they had every right to enjoy—very comfortable in that possession. There was, he thought, no doubt what the future of these men would be. They had been told by Mr. Redmond, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. O'Brien, in the House of Commons, that the land-grabber's life should not be a happy one, and if further proof were wanted it was supplied by Father Humphreys of Tipperary, who had said that if the evicted farms were not given up there would be bloodshed. It might be asked why he took so much interest in the future of these tenants? It was because in the autumn of 1888, when he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he made a speech at Belfast which he might say, without presumption, was of an important character, inasmuch as almost every organ of the Press in the United Kingdom took notice of it. In that speech he said that they were grappling with the Plan of Campaign, and that they were grappling with it successfully, because the evicted farms were being taken in large numbers. He said that the proof that the Plan of Campaign had been defeated was that these evicted farms were being so taken, and he assured the tenants who had taken evicted farms that they should receive the protection of the Government. He had made that statement deliberately, with the sanction and approval of his right hon. Friend, Mr. Balfour, who was then responsible for the government of Ireland; and having in that way pledged himself to these men that they should receive the protection of the Government, if he failed to stand by them in their hour of trouble—if he allowed a measure such as this to pass the House without objecting by vote and voice, he would be very justly denounced by these men in the same manner as the evicted tenants were denouncing Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien as the greatest traitors that ever cursed the Irish soil, for leading them into danger and then deserting them. It was because of these denunciations that Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien had forced the Government to press forward this Bill. He was thankful to think, though he was an humble Member of the late Conservative Government, that that Government never repudiated those pledges; and so long as he had a voice and vote he would use them in defence of these unfortunate men, and to prevent them being offered up as sacrifices to the promoters of the late agitation in Ireland. He could promise that the Unionist Government would never desert these men. Under ordinary circumstances he would now resume his seat, in the conviction that their Lordships would reject this Bill by a large majority; but he desired to deal with a question that was not altogether relevant to the subject before the House. He did it for the reason that Irish Debates were of so rare an occurrence in the House that matters with regard to Ireland were difficult to be discussed. They might remember that some months ago he raised an Irish Debate in the House in connection with the murder of the unfortunate caretaker, Donovan. He entered at considerable length into details of that murder; he asked the Government whether they were going to take notice of the speeches to which he attributed the crime, and whether they were going to repeal the Crimes Act, which was the only Act that could deal with crimes of that description. So long as he had dealt with the details of the murder, the Prime Minister retained his seat in the House, but when he left these details and proceeded to question the policy of the Government the noble Earl rose from his seat and executed a strategical retreat by going below the Bar with a speed which could only be equalled by his own equine representative on Epsom Downs. He caught sight of the noble Earl just as he was leaving, and he asked him to come back, which the noble Earl did. He asked the question as to what the Government intended to do in the case of this murder. No answer was then given by the noble Earl, but after the lapse of five days the noble Earl proceeded to Manchester and there delivered a speech a portion of which he did him the honour to devote to him (Lord Londonderry) on the particular subject he had raised in the House. What the noble Earl stated in Manchester was one of the most unfair and one of the most unworthy statements ever made by a Minister of the Crown. He directly stated that the Unionist Government gloated over the murder of the unfortunate man Donovan, and that it came down as rain on parched ground, and was a subject of a luscious and fruitful character to them——

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I do not think those were the words. I think I was alluding to the noble Lord's eloquence in those terms.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY was extremely flattered by the remark of the noble Earl, but he thought he was correct in saying that the spirit of the speech of the noble Earl at Manchester was that the Unionist Party rejoiced at the opportunity of bringing home to the Government an outrage in Ireland.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I will not now retire below the Bar, as it seems to annoy the noble Lord, and perhaps I shall cut short a digression which is against all the Rules of Order of this House, if I at once say that what I said was that the noble Marquess seized with alacrity the opportunity of discussing the murder before even an inquiry had been held into its origin.

*THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY said, that all he would say was that, as an humble Member of the Unionist Party, he repudiated that statement. The reason he brought the matter forward was because, having had official experience of Ireland at a time when crime and outrage were rife, he knew that speeches such as he referred to were the cause of such murders, and therefore he thought he would lose no time in pressing upon Her Majesty's Government the necessity of preventing those speeches. He ventured to say that when Parties changed positions in the House and when questions about Ireland were put to the Marquess of Salisbury by the present Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the action of the noble Marquess would be different from the action of the noble Earl. The noble Marquess would not retire to the Bar of the House; he would not lose one moment in repelling the attack. But then the noble Marquess had undoubted advantages over the noble Earl. Lord Salisbury was a master of debate, unrivalled, in his humble opinion, by any other Member of either House of Parliament, and he possessed great courage. In conclusion, he would only say, from his own experience, that if their Lordships rejected this Bill, as he knew they would by an overwhelming majority, their action would be endorsed by the vast majority of the electors of this country whenever Her Majesty's Government had the courage to give them the opportunity of recording their opinion.

THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Lord TWEEDMOUTH) said, he ventured to ask their Lordships' indulgence because, in the first place, he was but a recent Member of the House, and, secondly, because he stood to-night as the spokesman for a small minority of their Lordships. Some of his friends outside the House had often said to him that it must be a pleasant and enviable thing to represent in the House, and give utterance to in the House, opinions that were held by perhaps one in every 20 of their Lordships. But he could not feel any pleasure of that kind. He was bound to confess that the *genus loci* oppressed him; that he felt it hard to kick against the pricks; but however irksome it might be to do so, he was determined to tell their Lordships that, in his opinion, if they rejected this Bill they would be doing an act of detriment and danger to the State; that they would once more be refusing to take advantage of one of those opportunities which again and again had been presented to this House in regard to Ireland, and that the time would come when their Lordships might regret having let this opportunity pass, as they had done in other instances in the past. He had listened with regret to the speeches which had been delivered. He had thought this was a question like some which had come before them of recent years, on the principle of which they were agreed, and that the question was only as to the methods for carrying out that principle. But every speech delivered against the Bill had breathed hostility against it—root, branch, and detail. It was futile to say that the Government had shown themselves slow to offer compromise. How was compromise possible in the face of speeches such as had been delivered to-night? If compromise was to come about over this measure, the compromise must come from the Opposition or the Liberal Unionist Bench; it was impossible, after the denunciations of this Bill, that from the Government Benches an offer of compromise could be expected. The noble Marquess who had just sat down founded his speech on assertions rather than on arguments. He had made several assertions about Lord Spencer. He had said that the noble Earl had introduced the Home Rule Bill as a measure of separation between England and Ireland; and that the present Bill was a further measure of separation. That might be the opinion of the noble Marquess, but it was not the opinion of the Government. They on the Ministerial side believed that both the Home Rule Bill and this Bill, so far from leading to separation, would conduce to the union of the two countries. The noble Marquess said the Government dared not challenge the opinion of the country either on the rejection of the Home Rule Bill or the coming rejection of this Bill. But they did dare to challenge the opinion of the country. The English people had learned what was the position of things—they had been educated on the Irish Question during the last six years, and he ventured to tell their Lordships that when the Government came to refer their Irish policy to the decision of the electors of the country that the verdict of those electors would be in favour of their policy and against the policy advocated by the noble Marquess opposite. The quotations of the noble Marquess with regard to the Plan of Campaign, and other incidents in Ireland during the last few years, proved what no one denied, that a great agitation had taken place in that country. But the agitation had to a great extent closed. He believed that even the noble Marquess would admit that; and the Government had confidence that the proposals they now submitted would do much to close that agitation for ever. The noble Marquess said that the result of the Bill would be to drive the new tenants from their farms. He found no such proposal in the Bill. On the contrary, the question whether the new tenant was to go and make room for the evicted tenant was left entirely to the new tenant to decide; if the new tenant decided to remain, remain he would, for the Bill could not make him go; but if he decided to go, it awarded him compensation. Reference had been made by the noble Marquess to the new tenants on the Massereene and Luggacurren estates. The noble Marquess had quoted two estates which were favourable to his argument; but he would ask how many *bonâ fide* new tenants there were in Ireland outside these estates? The argument with regard to the number of tenants that would be dealt with under the Bill had, it appeared to him, gone on a vicious circle. On the one hand it was said the number was so large that it would be impossible to find money to satisfy their claims, while on the other hand it was said the number was so small that it was not worth while considering them, and that therefore the Bill was objectless. In dealing with an argument of that sort they had got to cut the vicious circle, and he ventured to say that while it was true that the Bill applied to all tenants in Ireland whose tenancies had been determined for any reason whatever between 1877 and 1894, yet the number of tenants who would come under the provisions of the Bill was not a very extensive number. He believed that the calculation of the Irish Office would probably be found to be correct, and that the number would be between 4,000 and 5,000. An immense number of the evicted tenants had been reinstated either as tenants or caretakers; and as the population of Ireland had decreased by 500,000 between 1881 and 1891, in a large number of the worse cases the men had left the country and would not come under the operation of the Bill.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: Why not?

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: Because they will not put in any claim.

Lord BALFOUR: How do you know?

The Marquess of SALISBURY: They may come back.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, that a certain number might come back; but, after all, if 500,000 people left Ireland between 1881 and 1891, and a large number of them were evicted tenants, the proportion of these tenants who would return from their position in the colonies or in America would not be great. It was the fact that the number of evicted tenants who would come under the Bill would be small, but they would be the worst cases of all, for they would be the cases from those estates — he believed they were few in number—the landlords of which had refused settlements. He did not desire to bring any charges against the Irish landlords. All he would say was that bad men would be found in every class, and it was with the cases of that fraction of Irish landlords who were irreconcilable that the Bill was intended to deal. The allegation that a large portion of these men were insolvent would not apply to the Plan of Campaign tenants, because the first condition of getting the benefit of the Plan of Campaign was the payment of the former rent, less the claimed reduction, into the bank. Therefore, those tenants, at least, could not be insolvent. It was said the Government were forced to bring in this Bill, because of the exigencies of the Lobby in the House of Commons. He met that charge with the most absolute negative. All classes seemed agreed that it was necessary to deal with the question of agrarian tenants. Men varying so much as Mr. Carson, Mr. T. W. Russell, and Mr. Courtney had agreed that the position of these tenants was one of danger, and ought to be dealt with.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I do not think Mr. Carson said anything like that.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, that so much did Mr. Carson say so that his letter to *The Times* on the subject drew a protest from Earl Grey, who wrote—

> "The object of Mr. Carson's letter is to deny that there is any ground for the idea that the Unionist Party in the House of Commons have adopted a *non possumus* attitude on the question of the evicted tenants in Ireland and their reinstatement, and have refused all compromise even on the basis of a purely voluntary Act. Those words clearly imply that the Party for which Mr. Carson speaks would have approved of a purely voluntary Act for the reinstatement of those tenants; and if I am not mistaken it is to be inferred that their approval would not have been withheld if the 'voluntary Act' proposed had included the provisions contained in the present Bill for granting public money in aid of the desired reinstatement."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The noble Lord said Mr. Carson admitted that it was necessary to deal with those evicted tenants. My memory inclines me to doubt very much whether Mr. Carson said that.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, that what Mr. Carson wrote to *The Times* was as follows:—

> "I find that notwithstanding Mr. Balfour's very specific statement to the contrary an idea prevails in many quarters that the Unionist Party in the House of Commons have adopted a *non possumus* attitude on the question of evicted tenants in Ireland and their reinstatement; and have refused all compromise even on the basis of a purely voluntary Act. Any such idea is absolutely without foundation, and has only gained currency from Mr. Courtney's speech."

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: That is not the same thing; it is not the point.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH (resuming) said, that a good deal of criticism had been directed to the position of the Arbitrators under the Bill. He always understood that one of the first necessary conditions of arbitration was that the Arbitrators should have a perfectly free hand—that they should be entirely unfettered. Now, he contended that if the action of the Arbitrators under this Bill was to be fettered by strict Rules an arbitration would thereby be instituted which, in its very essence, would be likely to fail. He should like to know whether the Prime Minister could have brought about a settlement between masters and men in the case of the coal strike; or the Home Secretary in the case of the coal strike if he had been fettered by conditions?

LORD ASHBOURNE: The noble Lord spoke about bringing the parties together. It is not suggested from the beginning to the end of the Bill.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the procedure under the Bill was this: the tenant in the first place stated his case; the Arbitrators had then to decide whether the tenant had made out a *bonâ fide* case; if they thought so the landlord was asked whether or not he objected to the reinstatement, and if he objected to show cause. The whole question was then gone into; and the Arbitrators were left unfetterred in their action. He believed that if they laid down Rules for the Arbitrators the Bill would be a failure. The noble Duke who spoke early in the Debate—the Duke of Argyll—had asked why the Government had chosen the limit of the year 1879 in the Bill. They had done so for exactly the same reason that the Conservative Government chose

1879 in relation to Clause 13 of the Bill of 1891, because that year was an exceptionally bad one in Ireland, when evictions were unusually numerous. He would not go into the long disquisition of the noble Duke on the Land Act of 1881—a disquisition which was introduced in order to give the noble Duke the opportunity of talking about himself, and not on account of any particular relation it bore to the Bill before the House. But the noble Duke said the effect of the Act of 1881 had been to stop any expenditure of rental on the improvement of land. There might be exceptions; but the noble Duke must know that the custom in Ireland was that the whole of the improvements should be carried out by the tenant, and that the landlord should spend no money on them at all.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT said, he entirely denied the statement of the noble Lord that the landlords never spend money on their estates. They had spent large sums, and he would not listen to such accusations against Irish landlords.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH replied that he stated that there were exceptions, but the general rule with Irish landlords was that they did not spend money on improvements.

VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT: It is not.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, that if the noble Lord said that it was the general rule for Irish landlords to spend money on the improvement of their land he propounded an altogether new doctrine, and one which would not find acceptance either in that House or with the public outside. The Duke of Argyll also stated that this Bill superseded and did away with the Act of 1881 without putting anything in its place. But the Bill did not touch the Act of 1881 at all; it ran on totally different lines; it dealt with special cases which had arisen since the Act of 1881, and that Act was in no way superseded by the Bill. The two main arguments adduced in support of the demand that their Lordships should reject this Bill was, in the first place, that the House of Commons had not discussed the measure and had been forcibly prevented from discussing it; in the second place, the Bill was a compulsory one. The first argument, he thought, was neither serious nor sincere, for the whole time devoted to the consideration of the Bill in the House of Commons amounted to 59 hours and 50 minutes, or nine Parliamentary days, a considerably longer period than their Lordships were wont to devote to any Bill, however important. But they might have discussed it at much greater length in the House of Commons. For what happened? No proposal to closure the Bill was brought forward till two days had been spent in Committee on the first two lines of the first clause. It was the Opposition which made it perfectly clear that it would be impossible to get the Bill through the other House at all without some such measures as were adopted, and he thought these measures, so far from being on the side of severity, were on the side of leniency. What were those measures? It was proposed by the Government to give five more days to the Committee stage, and one day for the Report stage before the Bill should be closured. But Members of the Opposition preferred to throw up the sponge and to say they would not play. The Government knew there was nothing which the Opposition desired so much in the House of Commons as that the closure should be applied, and that it should be applied in its sharpest and quickest manner. In the first place, men desired to go to the country, to their watering places, to their yachts, and to their grouse moors, and they also wished for the closure in order to give their Lordships the best reason for rejecting this Bill. To say then that a fair opportunity was not given to discuss this Bill in the House of Commons was to say the thing which was not true, a point he was prepared to discuss at any meeting in the country. The second main argument against the Bill was the question of compulsion. He thought a great deal more talk had been made than was necessary with regard to the small measure of compulsion in this Bill. It was not a new principle; it appeared in the Land Acts of 1870, 1881, and 1887. The principle was perhaps adapted to the greatest extent of all in the Act of 1887—passed by a Conservative Government—which absolutely interfered compulsorily with the judicial rents fixed under the Act of 1881. It was said that it was a very hard thing for a landlord to be forced under this Bill to accept a tenant he did not wish to receive. But the Irish landlord had to do it already under the Act of 1881. Under the free sale clause of that Act any person who bought the tenant-right of a farm must be received by the landlord whether he liked it or not. [*Cries of* "No!"] Perhaps he had put it in rather too strong a manner. At any rate, the practical effect of the free sale clause of the Act of 1881 asked that a landlord very often had to receive a tenant whom he would rather not receive. It was true that in this case a landlord would be bound to receive back a tenant he had evicted, and whom, perhaps, he did not want to receive back. But the Bill did not do that without giving the landlord any alternative. It should be borne in mind that a landlord to whom application was made under this Bill to reinstate a tenant might require the tenant to purchase his holding. That right appeared to him to constitute a considerable mitigation of the alleged hardship of compulsory reinstatement. He regretted very much the line which was taken in this House with regard to the Bill. He believed their Lordships' House was not the best of tribunals for dealing with such a question as this. They were, in the first place, a House of landlords. A tribunal of one class only, however impartial it desired to be, must almost necessarily be affected by the interest of the particular class to which it belonged. He did not think there was any offence to anybody in saying that was his view. He believed this House had a still further disqualification in dealing with this question. In their Lordships' House they were free from feeling any of the influences which were brought to bear on the Members of the other House by the general mass of the electors. It might be for good, or it might be for evil, but after all, the Government of the country was in the hands of the electors, who had been successively enfranchised, and he thought it was a dangerous thing for a body of men to decide questions regarding Ireland who were not in constant daily contact with the mass of the electors of the country. It might be said that he was taking a Whip's view, which was supposed to be the view of a man who cared nothing for the means he employed, but thought only of the end. That might have been the case with a former generation, but it was not so now. In the old days Whips had great patronage, and had great sums of money, including the £10,000 for secret service, at their command. In these days the Whips had no patronage to bestow, and with regard to money, the other side might have large sums of money at their command, but he could answer for it that the Liberal Whips had none. In his opinion, no man could successfully fulfil the duties of the position which he had once the honour to fulfil in the other House, unless he realised the true inwardness of the subjects to be dealt with by his Party from time to time. He had enjoyed very exceptional and unusual opportunities, therefore, for testing the opinion of the country, not only through Members of Parliament, but through the opinions of all conditions of men throughout the country; and he deliberately told their Lordships that, in his judgment, in rejecting this Bill they were making a great mistake, and a mistake which they would live to rue.

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*The Duke of Devonshire.*)

Motion agreed to; further Debate adjourned till To-morrow.

VALUATION OF LANDS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

(No. 163.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

NAUTICAL ASSESSORS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 193.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 194.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [H.L.].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

TOWN IMPROVEMENTS (BETTERMENT)

Messages from the Commons for Reports, &c. of Select Committees: Ordered to be communicated accordingly.

MARKING OF FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PRODUCE.

Messages from the Commons for Reports, &c. of Select Committees: Ordered to be communicated accordingly.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 11) (LAGAN, &c., CANALS) BILL.—(No. 197.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) (BIRMINGHAM CANAL) BILL.—(No. 198.)

Moved That the Order made on the 19th day of March last—

> "That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next"

be dispensed with, and that the Bills be read 2ª: agreed to; Bills read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) (CANALS OF THE GREAT NORTHERN AND CERTAIN OTHER RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 184.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) (ABERDARE &c., CANALS) BILL.—(No. 186.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 5) (REGENT'S CANAL) BILL.—(No. 187.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 7) (RIVER ANCHOLME, &c.) BILL.—(No. 188.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 8) (RIVER CAM, &c.) BILL.—(No. 189.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 10) (CANALS OF CALEDONIAN AND NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.

now

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 9) (CANALS OF CALEDONIAN AND NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL. (No. 190.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 12) (GRAND CANALS, &c.,) BILL.

now

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 11) (GRAND CANAL, &c.) BILL. (No. 191.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

PRIZE COURTS BILL [H.L.].—(No. 56.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; Commons Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord President [*E. Rosebery*]. (No. 207.)

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord Chancellor). (No. 208.)

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord Hawkesbury). (No. 209.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow (The Lord Privy Seal [*L. Tweedmouth.*]) (No. 210.)

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next: (The Lord Chancellor). (No. 204.)

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 6) (RIVER LEE, &c.) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 211.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Ordered that the Evening Sitting of the House To-morrow do commence at half-past Four o'clock.

House adjourned at five minutes past Twelve o'clock a.m., to half-past Ten o'clock a.m.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 13th August 1894.

QUESTIONS.

POLICE ASSISTANCE TO A "PLANTER."

Dr. D. AMBROSE (Louth, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 10th of April last a planter named Shaw, on the Massereene estate, was proceeding to Slane with a load of straw, and that the load having slipped or fallen two policemen stationed at Glassallen assisted him in rebuilding it; whether this is any part of the duty of the Constabulary; and if the performance of such work interferes with their usefulness in other respects?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am informed that the facts are as stated in the first paragraph. The load of straw had slipped, and was in danger of toppling over and injuring the horse. The action of the police was quite voluntary, and they assisted the man regardless of whether he was a new tenant or an evicted tenant. The police are expected to render aid to the public in any emergency of this kind, and I believe that in the same district a police patrol by their timely action recently saved the life of the only cow owned by an evicted tenant.

DROWNED IN THE RIVER FFRWD.

Mr. D. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): On behalf of the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Denbighshire, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the recent death by drowning in the River Ffrwd (which divides the Counties of Denbigh and Flint) of two little girls aged six years or thereabouts when returning from school; whether such accident was due to the dangerous and unprotected state of the bridge over this river which is a public thoroughfare; whether application has been made to the Wrexham Highway Board and the Hawarden Highway Board (in whose districts the bridge is situate) to repair and protect such bridge; whether these bodies have declined to do so on the ground that they are not responsible for its condition; and whose duty is it to place the bridge into a state in which it will no longer be dangerous to life?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I have made inquiry, and I am informed that the structure in question can hardly be designated a bridge. It consists of two joints of timber about six feet long, with slabs forming a footway of about 18 inches in width, and that it has no hand-rail upon it. The structure in question, it is stated, was erected by the owner of some cottages adjoining the river for the convenience of his tenants, and has not been recognised as a public bridge. One end of the structure is in the Wrexham Highway District, and the other in the Hope and Hawarden District. I am informed that the Wrexham Highway Board took prompt steps, as soon as the dangerous place was brought to their notice, with the intention of doing whatever lay in their power to remedy it, and that they have no doubt that they will have the co-operation of the Hope and Hawarden District Board in the matter.

ALLEGED DIMINUTION IN INCOMES OF NATIONAL TEACHERS.

Mr. KNOX (Cavan, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Cavan, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the decrease in the national teachers' capitation grant from 4s. 8d. to 3s. 8d. per head, the Government intend to take any steps to increase the fund in the manner contemplated by the Education Act; whether the widows and orphans of deceased teachers receive anything from the pension fund; and, if so, under what conditions; whether, in a recent case in County Cavan, the widow and orphans of a teacher who died after 34 years' service received no allowance; and whether the Government will publish an Actuarial Report showing the state of the pension fund at the present time, and announce any changes they propose to make in its regulation?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Education Act of 1892 provides, in abolition or relief of school fees, a sum of £210,000 a year for the teachers over and above all the other Parliamentary grants. The distribution of this sum takes place under the following heads:—(*a*) A capitation allowance to schools paid by capitation; (*b*) an increase of 20 per cent. on salaries where teachers are paid by salaries and not by capitation; (*c*) a special bonus to assistant teachers; (*d*) a special allowance to teachers of small schools; and, (*e*) after payment of all these sums, the residue of the £210,000 is divided in an all-round capitation grant on the average school attendance. This residue must of course be a varying sum from year to year, and the more that must be paid under the first four specified heads the less necessarily will be the residue; and, again, as the average attendance increases, the less will be the quotient of the available residue into which the attendance is divided. But every penny of the £210,000 goes to the teachers. While the school fees to teachers in 1893 were about £88,000 less than for the year 1891—the year preceding the passing of the Act—the grant of £210,000 was a net gain of £122,000, or an average of about £10 per teacher. There is no provision for pensions or allowances for the widows and orphans of deceased teachers, excepting the provision that if a teacher die in the service the premiums paid by him towards his pension shall be paid to his legal representative, with interest at 3 per cent. per annum. The statement in the third paragraph is correct. The matter referred to in the concluding paragraph is one for the Treasury.

Mr. KNOX: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the clause in the Education Act referred to in the answer does not fix an absolute sum of £210,000 a year, but contemplates an increase in the grant in proportion to the increase of the English grant, and that it was 9 per cent. of the total sum granted to the United Kingdom; and is he aware that the English grant has increased very much more than was contemplated at the time?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any information as to the effect of this Act on schools where fees were high?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I do not know how far the statements of my hon. and learned Friend are authentic. No doubt we can discuss the matter on the Education Estimates. I will inquire as to the question put by the hon. Member for South Tyrone.

BELFAST POST OFFICE.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General why no decision has yet been communicated to the members of the sorting staff of the Belfast Post Office, who forwarded a Memorial some 15 months ago praying that they might be accorded their seniority upon the staff of the office from the date of their entry as auxiliaries, and not from the date of their Civil Service certificates, which at present determines the order of seniority; whether the present disabilities of these members of the staff arise from causes over which they had no control, and is he aware that loss of seniority in this case entails pecuniary loss to the officers concerned; and whether the decision recently given in the case of a member of the staff of the Dublin Sorting Office is applicable in the case of Belfast?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): The hon. Member has apparently been misinformed. The Memorial in question, far from having been left undecided for 15 months, was answered within six weeks of its receipt. The prayer of the Memorial was that the order in which the Memorialists had stood on their class for the last six years might be altered, and this, they were informed, could not be done. An appeal which they subsequently made adduced cases which were not in point. It is true that since that answer was given a different practice has been introduced, and now rotation on a class is not exclusively determined by the dates of the Civil Service certificates; but to make such practice retrospective in its operation is absolutely out of the question—introducing, as it would, an element of disturbance into almost every office in the Kingdom.

Mr. A. FORSTER: Would it not be possible to remedy the grievance in cases in which the default in issuing the certificates was in no way due to remissness on the part of the person appointed, the grievance in such cases being attributable to the action of the Post Office?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I do not think it would be possible without doing an injustice to other members of the staff.

THE EX-CHIEF CONSTABLE OF WARWICKSHIRE.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet received any communication from the Joint Committee of the County of Warwick with respect to Mr. Kinchant's pension in accordance with the resolution passed by the Committee some weeks ago?

***The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.)**: Yes; and an answer has been sent.

THE DUBLIN DRAINAGE SCHEME.

Mr. ROSS (Londonderry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the proposed new drainage scheme for Dublin is, if carried out, likely to cost at least £500,000; that, in addition to the cost of construction, an annual charge of £12,000 for maintenance will be thrown on the ratepayers; that the scheme has been disapproved of by the chief sanitary experts, except the engineer who devised it; and that the Corporation, notwithstanding the protests of all the Dublin newspapers except one, and the resolutions of the ratepayers in public meetings, have refused to grant any inquiry into the merits of the scheme; and whether, in view of the fact that the War Office is the largest ratepayer in Dublin, before proceeding further with the negotiations for the sale of the Pigeon House Fort, he will call for a Report on the merits of the scheme from the Royal Engineers Corps in Dublin?

***The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE (Mr. Woodall, Hanley)**: The Secretary of State is not informed of the estimated ultimate cost to the City of Dublin of its proposed drainage scheme, nor of the difference of opinion that may exist in Dublin on the subject. Any agreement with the Corporation of Dublin in regard to Pigeon House Fort will be based on a full consideration of all the conditions essential to the agreement as far as the War Department is concerned.

Mr. ROSS: Has the Secretary for War ever called for or received any Report from the Royal Engineer Corps on the merits of this scheme?

***Mr. WOODALL**: Yes, Sir; the Royal Engineers have continually advised the right hon. Gentleman on the merits of the scheme, so far as it affects War Department property.

Mr. ROSS: Is there any objection to laying the Report of the Royal Engineers on the Table of the House?

***Mr. WOODALL**: I do not think I can undertake to publish what, after all, is merely a Departmental Report.

RAILWAY RATES AT BOYLE.

Mr. BODKIN (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade is he aware that traders in Boyle have to pay £4 per wagon of six tons by rail from Dublin, while traders in Sligo, which is 30 miles further, have only £3 to pay; and will he have inquiries instituted and remonstrance made with a view to the removal of this state of things?

***The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bryce, Aberdeen, S.)**: The hon. Member does not state the particular description of traffic on which the rates he quotes are charged; if he will give further particulars I will communicate with the Company. Possibly sea competition has something to do with the difficulty.

Mr. BODKIN : I believe the traffic carried is largely porter.

*Mr. BRYCE : Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will send me a letter on the subject.

BEHAR CADASTRAL SURVEY.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of Bengal, or the Government of India, propose to introduce into the local Legislative Council a measure to legalise their own interpretation of the words "a local area," in the Bengal Tenancy Act, in opposition to high legal authority, so as to enable them to impose further taxation on the land of Behar for the purposes of the Behar Cadastral Survey; whether those Governments propose also to empower themselves to collect by a summary process from each landlord all his tenants shares, in addition to his own share, of the costs of the Cadastral Survey, the landlord being left to recoup himself as best he can by the ordinary tedious process of law; whether the local officers have reported that this procedure will embitter the relations between the landlords and the tenants of Behar, without reconciling the tenants to the Government survey policy; whether the official members of the Legislative Council will be permitted to vote on these questions as they think fit; and whether the further correspondence, including the Reports of the local officers, can be submitted to Parliament before the Debate on the Indian Budget?

The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.) : I am not aware of any proposal such as is suggested in the first clause of the question. The Government of India are acting on the advice of their Advocate General as to the interpretation of the words "local area." It is proposed to collect the costs of the Survey, so far as that cost is not borne by the Government, from and through the landlords, by the same procedure as that by which the road cess has been collected during the past 23 years. I am not aware of any Reports by local officers to the effect mentioned in the question. As regards the votes of the official members of the Legislative Council, there will be no difference between the Behar Survey Bill and any other Government measure. The further Papers moved for by my hon. Friend were laid upon the Table on the 6th of July, and were distributed to Members to-day.

ANNUAL LEAVE IN THE POST OFFICE.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.) : I beg to ask the Postmaster General if he is prepared to grant to the senior officers of the Post Office an extension of their annual leave, in accordance with Clause 7 of the Order in Council of 15th August, 1890?

Mr. A. MORLEY : Clause 7 of the Order in Council, 1890, provides a maximum limit for leave beyond which Heads of Departments are not at liberty to go. Any extension of annual leave in so large a Department as the Post Office involves such grave financial and administrative considerations that I am not disposed to overrule the decision at which my predecessor (Mr. Raikes) arrived on the subject.

Mr. COHEN : Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the amount of leave granted to the senior officers does not amount to the maximum referred to, and that in the Customs and Inland Revenue Departments the full leave is given?

Mr. A. MORLEY : I am not aware of that.

ALLEGED WRONGFUL IMPRISONMENT AT LEIGH.

Mr. WOODS (Lancashire, S.E., Ince) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the alleged wrongful imprisonment of Charles Barton at the Leigh Police Court, Lancashire, on Monday, July 30; whether he is aware that at the hearing of the case evidence was given by four witnesses that Barton was at Astley, which is more than a mile from the place where the assault was committed on the police constable, at the time when the offence was committed, and that not one single independent witness gave evidence against Barton; whether he is aware that the Chairman of the Magistrates admitted that the evidence showed that

Barton was not present when the assault was committed, and that Sergeant Gledhill and Police Constable Shaw saw two persons named Speakman and Leech on the Sunday, the day previous to the hearing, and were told that Barton was at Astley at the time the offence was committed at Tyldesley; that the two policemen refrained from giving this evidence at the trial; and that the Magistrates convicted Barton on the ground that he might have been present; and if he will cause a strict inquiry into the circumstances under which he has been convicted?

MR. ASQUITH: I have had careful inquiry made, and have received a Report, together with the evidence, from the Clerk to the Magistrates by whom the case was heard. Evidence was given by three witnesses on Barton's behalf as to his whereabouts on the night of the assault, but on the other hand police constable Duncan, who was corroborated by another police constable, swore positively that when he, Duncan, was on the ground Barton came up and kicked him on the leg; that he knew Barton well, and called out to him, "I see you, Barton," and Barton hung down his head and ran to the back of the crowd. The Chairman did not admit that the evidence showed that Barton was not present when the assault was committed. On the contrary, he said that the Magistrates believed the evidence of the police. Serjeant Gledhill and police constable Shaw were told by Speakman and Leech on Sunday before the hearing that Barton was at Astley at the time the offence was committed at Tyldesley. The constables could not themselves give this evidence. At the hearing Speakman was a witness. Leech was not. It was thought his evidence would be immaterial. He spoke to the defendant being at Astley at 7 and at 10 o'clock, but the assault took place at 9.30. I see no reason to question the justice of this decision or the propriety of the sentence.

THE MILITARY CONTRIBUTION OF THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the cause of the delay in coming to a decision as to the amount of the contribution to be paid for military expenditure by the Straits Settlements; and whether he is aware that grave dissatisfaction exists there in consequence of the present impost, and that a number of urgent public works of importance, education, and postal arrangements, have been restricted in consequence of the present rate of taxation to meet the military contribution?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The question affects three different Departments, and is one of considerable complexity; at the same time, I regret the delay that has taken place in coming to a decision; and I hope that the decision will not be now much longer delayed.

WATER SUPPLY TO PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE CORRIDORS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, having regard to the fact that one set of water-closets off the Committee Room corridors is supplied from a cistern from which water is drawn for domestic purposes, he will state from what cistern and source the drinking water in the dining room and bar is obtained?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): My right hon. Friend has asked me to reply for him. The drinking water in the dining room and bar is drawn direct from the main tanks of the building.

MR. WEIR: From what source is the water obtained?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I have merely read the answer sent me. I have no doubt the water is drawn from a good source.

MR. WEIR: Is it from the River Thames or from the artesian wells?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I am unable to answer that question.

MR. WEIR: I will put it down again.

REACH NATIONAL SCHOOL, SWAFFHAM'S PRIOR.

SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): On behalf of the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether the managers of Reach National School, Swaffham's Prior, were warned, in November last year, for not having a certificated mistress; whether he is aware that they found great difficulty in obtaining one; whether the grant has, in consequence, been this year reduced from £38 to £11; whether the managers have now complied; and whether, in view of the fact that the school was under a non-certificated though efficient mistress for only about four months, he will reconsider the reduction of the grant?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): This school was without a certificated teacher for eight months of the school year, ending last October, and consequently received only four months' grant. During the year in question, the managers saved £28 15s. on salaries, as compared with the previous year, while the grant forfeited amounted to £22 6s. 4d. They thus appear to have made a clear gain of between £6 and £7. A certificated teacher has since been appointed. I see no reason for reconsidering the case.

THE POLICE AND THE BOTHWELL PARK MINERS.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to a complaint from a public meeting in the neighbourhood, that the police were the aggressors in a disturbance at the mining village of Bothwell Park, last week; and whether, in the interests of the public and of the Police Force, he has made or will make inquiry into this complaint?

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Sir G. TREVELYAN, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am in communication with the Standing Joint Committee of Lanarkshire on the matter referred to by the hon. Member, and hope to have a Report from them of the circumstances of the case to-morrow or next day.

THE TUBERCULOSIS COMMISSION.

MR. D. CRAWFORD: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can explain the cause of the delay in issuing the Report of the Commission on Tuberculosis, and state when it may be expected?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE: I stated on the 20th of last month that I was informed that the Commissioners were fully aware of the desirability of reporting as early as possible, that no pains were being spared to complete the work, and that the Report would shortly be issued. I have no later information on the subject.

VENTILATION AT ST. STEPHEN'S.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will state why no effect has been given to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Ventilation, 1891, that the extraction shafts, common to all the rooms, be furnished with non-return or back-pressure valves, in order to prevent down draughts, and that the existing ventilating furnace arrangements be improved?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The whole of the improvements in the ventilation of this building which were recommended by the Select Committee of 1891 have been carried out.

MR. WEIR: The First Commissioner of Works declared the other day that no alteration had been made. I shall have to put another question on this subject.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, before the Indian Budget comes on for discussion, he will have circulated, or placed at the disposal of Members, in the Vote Office, Copies of the House of Lords Paper containing the discussion in the Viceroy's Council on the Tariff Bill, and the dissents of the Members of the Council of India on that subject?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: I have taken the necessary steps for having the Paper referred to sent to the Vote Office.

SIR W. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.): Is there any objection to publishing the correspondence which has taken place between the Indian Government and the India Office on the subject?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The correspondence is still going on.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) asked whether the Government would arrange before the Debate was taken to have printed for the use of Members a list of the tariffs?

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he thought that would be included in the Return.

DENUNCIATIONS OF LAND-GRABBERS IN COUNTY ROSCOMMON.

MR. W. KENNY (Dublin, St. Stephen's Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the fact that a large meeting was held at Muckinagh, County Roscommon, on Sunday, the 5th instant, for the purpose of denouncing the conduct of a farmer who had taken an evicted farm on the estate of Major Balfe, at which speeches were made urging the people not to save the grabber's meadow, to keep an eye on the shopkeepers who were in the habit of receiving him, and then he would begin to see that the people would not tolerate such reptiles in the country; whether he is aware that Mr. James Neary also spoke at the meeting and said they had assembled there to discuss the accursed system of land-grabbing; if this Mr. Neary has been recently created a Justice of the Peace; if any steps were taken by the Police Authorities to prohibit the meeting or make any of the parties at it amenable; and whether Mr. Neary's language will be brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor?

MR. BODKIN: Is there anything illegal in a meeting held to discuss the system of land-grabbing in Ireland?

MR. J. MORLEY: That is a question on which I am not prepared to express a general opinion. Cases must be judged on their own merits. A meeting was held near Muckinagh on the date mentioned in the question on the Paper for the purpose of condemning land-grabbing, and speeches to the effect stated were made on the occasion. About 600 persons were present at the meeting. The police had instructions not to allow the meeting to be held within a mile of the farm to which reference is made in the question. The reply to the third and fourth paragraphs is in the affirmative. I shall bring the language of Mr. Neary under the notice of the Lord Chancellor. The other speeches made on the occasion of the meeting are now under the consideration of the Law Officers.

LEVEL CROSSINGS ON THE BELFAST AND COUNTY DOWN RAILWAY.

MR. RENTOUL (Down, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a Memorial has been presented to the Board of Trade calling attention to a level crossing on the Belfast and County Down Railway, near Helen's Bay, which is alleged to be dangerous to the public; and whether such danger exists; and, if so, whether anything has been done or can be done in the matter?

MR. BRYCE: Yes, Sir; I have seen the Memorial referred to. The crossing is an ordinary occupation crossing, and the Board of Trade have no powers over it. An Inspecting Officer of this Board recently visited the place, and advised the Board that there was nothing exceptionally dangerous in the crossing or its surroundings. I fear nothing can be done in the matter, as the Act of 1863 affects only turnpike roads and public carriage roads.

THE WIGAN POLICE AND PUBLIC MEETINGS.

MR. WOODS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that on the 7th instant, while a public meeting was being held near the tram terminus in Wigan, and in consequence of a drunken man disturbing the meeting, the police officer ordered the meeting to be broken up, took the names and addresses of the chairman and lecturer, and threatened to summon them; whether the police officer had any authority to order a peaceably-conducted meeting to be thus broken up; and whether he proposes to take any steps to remedy the action of the police officer?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes; inquiry has been made and a Report received from the police of Wigan from which, and from the statement of another witness, it appears that the police constable had to interfere in order to stop two fights. He did not break up the meeting, though he requested the speaker to desist, and took his name. The speaker, I am informed, continued lecturing for an hour afterwards.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING CONTRACTS AND THE FAIR WAGES RESOLUTION.

MR. WOODS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that among the compositors and associated employers in the printing of London there exists great dissatisfaction respecting the manner in which Government contracts for printing are let, some of which have been let to firms who neither pay the standard rates of wages, and work more hours than is recognised by the Employers' Printing Association and the London Compositors' Society; and whether, in future, the Government will give effect to the successive Resolutions passed by the House of Commons dealing with the subject of letting contracts, by inserting into all future Government printing contracts a clause making it imperative that the wages paid and the hours worked shall be those recognised in the London scale?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I assume that my hon. Friend refers to the firm of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. I have already made inquiries, and the information at my disposal appears to show that, taken as a whole, the wages paid by the firm in question in their non-Union house are as liberal as those paid in their Union house and other Union houses, and that the normal hours are the same. As regards overtime (which, I am assured, is very limited in amount) and the alleged divergences from the London scale of prices, I propose to see a representative of the firm and to make further inquiries from him, and if the facts should constitute in my judgment a breach of the Resolution of the House, I should not hesitate to take action.

THE CROFTERS' ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in order to carry the Crofters' Act Amendment Bill this Session, he will arrange for an Autumn Session to pass that Bill and any other pressing measures? The hon. Member, in putting the question, said he desired to amend it by inserting, after the word "whether" in the first line, the phrase "having regard to the fact that the Government decline to use the closure." He further asked why the right hon. Gentleman had abandoned all hope of passing this Bill during the present Session; and whether it was within his recollection that only last week he advised the Highland Members not to abandon all hope of this Bill passing this Session.

DR. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): Before the right hon. Gentleman replies —[*Opposition laughter*]—I am glad my getting up has so agreeable an effect on Gentlemen opposite, and creates so much merriment—I wish to ask him, being specially interested in this subject, whether he is aware that I can neither endorse nor approve of the suggestions contained in the question of my hon. Friend?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): If my hon. Friend behind me (Dr. Macgregor) cannot agree with my hon. Friend below me (Mr. Weir) he cannot expect that I can coincide with this suggestion, and when my hon. Friend talks of abandoning all hope, he may remember there was an ancient inscription to that effect, and I believe it might be written over the door of the House of Commons in the middle of August. I am afraid I cannot gratify the wish of my hon. Friend.

MR. WEIR: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that many of the Irish Members are prepared to sacrifice their holiday on the altar of duty, and to stop here in this House in order to advance legislation, not only for the Highland Crofters, but for the masses of the people of the country.

[No answer was given].

HEVER SCHOOLS.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if he can now state under what conditions the grant of £10 which has been withheld from Hever Schools, Kent, will be paid to the managers?

MR. ACLAND: As I informed the hon. Member on the 23rd of July, this grant will be paid if the managers satisfy the Department that the conditions of the Code as to population are satisfied.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: Is it not a fact there is not sufficient time to get it done?

MR. ACLAND: There is time.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN: Does the right hon. Gentleman expect managers to take a private census of their own?

MR. ACLAND: Yes, Sir; we constantly ask for one in all parts of the country.

CLASHMORE CONSTABULARY BARRACK.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for West Waterford, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the defective sanitary condition of the constabulary barrack at Clashmore, County Waterford, has been reported upon by Dr. O'Ryan, sanitary officer of the district; and whether, within the past few months, three constables and a sergeant have had to be removed therefrom to hospital suffering from typhoid fever; and, if so, are steps in progress for rendering the barrack safe for occupation?

MR. J. MORLEY: The defective sanitary condition of the constabulary barrack referred to has been reported on by Dr. O'Ryan, medical attendant to the Constabulary at that post, and within the past six months a sergeant and a constable were removed to hospital suffering from typhoid fever. Another constable has also fallen ill, though it is not yet known whether he suffers from typhoid. The position of this barrack is considered to be an unhealthy one, and there being no other suitable house, the station is being abolished, with the concurrence of Government.

STRABANE RATE COLLECTION.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it has been brought to his notice that James Craig, Rate Collector, Strabane Union, is in arrear with his collection, £342, in consequence of which some voters must be disqualified for non-payment of rates at the forthcoming revision for North Tyrone; whether Craig furnished the Clerk of Union with any list of defaulters, so that official objections might be entered on the Voters List for non-payment of rates; whether the private objector for the North Tyrone Nationalists, John Torish, applied for and was refused permission to inspect the list of defaulters, if such exists; whether, last year, a number of persons in Craig's collection, who had not paid rates, were allowed without objection to remain on the Register; and whether the Government will secure that private objectors for political parties in North Tyrone and elsewhere shall be allowed free access to all Poor Law records and documents on which the right to the franchise depends, so that if, whether by mistake, neglect, or any other cause the Union officials fail in their duty, an opportunity may be given to correct errors in time to affect the Register?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have received a Report from the Local Government Board on this question of my hon. and learned Friend, but as there are certain matters in respect of which I desire some further information, I shall be glad if he will defer it until Thursday next.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As the rate collector has again refused our Inspector access to his books, will the right hon. Gentleman call his attention to the fact that he is acting contrary to Act of Parliament?

MR. J. MORLEY: I will cause immediate inquiry to be made.

REFUSAL TO GRANT AN ARMS LICENCE.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for West Mayo, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can give any reason why J. T. Staunton, rural postman in Achill Island, was refused a gun licence by the Resident Magistrate at Belmullet, although he was informed that the only object in getting a gun was for the purpose of shooting seals and selling the skins?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Resident Magistrate informs me that, in the exercise of the discretion vested in him by law, he declined to issue an arms licence to the person named in the question. It would be contrary to practice to state the reasons which influenced the Resident Magistrate in refusing to grant the licence in this or other cases. But I am not satisfied with these reasons, and I am of opinion the man should have the licence.

HARVEST WEATHER FORECASTS.

MR. HUGH HOARE (Cambridge, Chesterton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether the experiment now being made in Cambridgeshire and some other counties, whereby the Meteorological Society telegraph the weather forecast at 3.30 p.m.

for the next 24 hours to certain country post offices, could not be made more thorough and useful by his arranging with the Postmaster General for him to direct that the rural postmen shall convey a copy of the telegram to villages where they deliver letters, but which are not within easy reach of the telegraph office; and whether, for example, a copy of the telegraphic forecast now sent to the small village of Arrington could be given to the rural postman who delivers in Orwell, Wimpole, Croydon, and Tadlow, and affixed outside these post offices for the benefit of farmers and others?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): The suggestion of my hon. Friend is, I think, well worth consideration, and I shall be very glad to confer with my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General respecting it in the event of the continuance next year of the arrangements for the telegraphic transmission of the weather forecasts to rural districts. Those arrangements, however, come to an end very shortly, so far as the present year is concerned, and I do not think it would be practicable to extend them as proposed within the limits of the time which still remains.

THE IRISH LAND AND MIGRATION COMPANY.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to a letter published by His Eminence Cardinal Logue respecting the Irish Land and Migration Company and the dealings of the Government therewith, especially as to the free gift of £50,000 by the State; and will any explanation be called for from any person concerned, or is it intended to take any notice of or call for any reply to the statements of His Eminence?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have seen the letter. As the question did not appear on the Paper until Saturday, I have not had time to get the information.

THE SOUTH MEATH POLLING LISTS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland who is responsible for the denial of the allegations as to the insertions of controverted names on the Dunshaughlin Polling List for South Meath; will he order a copy of the Register to be sent over for his personal inspection; and, if not, will he inquire of the police at Ashbourne Barracks, where the 1894 list is exhibited, whether or not the names appear on it; and has he any further information from the Revising Barrister?

Mr. J. MORLEY: As regards the seven names to which the question refers, I find that Brien Carney is on the Register for 1894. Five of the seven names are on the supplementary list for this year, but these persons will not be entitled to the franchise until the supplemental list has been revised at the ensuing revision. This supplemental list when revised will form part of the Register for 1895, but the persons comprised in it are not *ipso facto* entitled to the franchise for 1894. The list, I am advised, forms no part of the Register for 1894. My hon. and learned Friend in his previous question inquired whether the seven names appear on the present Register, and my reply, which was based on the Report of the Clerk of the Peace, was therefore accurate save in regard to one name—that of Brien Carney.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I am not satisfied with that answer. It is incorrect to say that only one name appears in the Register. I myself produced the Register and showed two. The other five are in the supplemental list. Is the right hon. Gentleman going to tolerate this deception of the House of Commons by an official?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have already given orders for a remonstrance to be addressed to him.

Mr. DODD (Essex, Maldon): In what way could this official be discharged?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I have had occasion to put five questions in regard to this list. Inasmuch as the majority for South Meath is only 50 and the questions put affect 30 names, will the right hon. Gentleman send down an Inspector to hold an inquiry, sworn or otherwise, into the circumstances?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Not being satisfied with the answers, I am considering the proper way of dealing with the matter. I intend to go into it.

Mr. DODD: Can the right hon. Gentleman answer my question?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: He can be discharged by the Lord Chancellor or under the Act of 1877.

LOWESTOFT SCHOOLS AND THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Mr. H. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education if a letter was forwarded to the Department in June last from the correspondents of the following schools or groups of schools in Lowestoft, St. Margaret's Group, Boys' British and Girls', Arnold Street, St. John's Parochial, and Christ Church, representing elementary school accommodation for 3,523 children, requesting an interview with the Vice President upon various matters raised by Her Majesty's Inspector; whether the Chief Inspector, whom he has promised to send to Lowestoft to inquire into matters connected with Christ Church Infant School, will be directed to report upon these matters also, and for this purpose to put himself in communication with the managers of these schools; and can he state when the Chief Inspector will go down?

Mr. ACLAND: I was obliged to decline this interview, as I have to decline many others, but I offered an interview with one of the officers of the Department. The Senior Chief Inspector will visit Lowestoft next month, and will inquire into the further matters raised in the question.

THE COURSE OF BUSINESS.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I promised to make a statement to-day with reference to the future conduct of Public Business. If hon. Gentlemen will look at the Order Paper—I need say nothing about the first three Orders — the Equalisation of Rates Bill, the Railway and Canal Traffic Bill, and the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill. As to the fourth, Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill, I understand that there is opposition to that Bill, and therefore it will not be proceeded with. I may say I have taken the usual means to ascertain, as far as I can, how far any of the remaining measures are or are not contentious measures. It has been the object of the Government to clear the Paper of all Bills which they have reason to believe are contentious measures, and only to leave upon it those which may be regarded as non-contentious. I believe that the Diseases of Animals Bill, which is a consolidation Bill, may be taken as non-contentious, and it will be proceeded with. The Larceny Acts Amendment Bill is, I understand, opposed, and that will not be proceeded with. The Congested Districts Board (Ireland) Bill, which was brought in by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary and also by the Leader of the Opposition, I hope we may treat as strictly a non-contentious measure. Then comes the Statute Law Revision Bill, and Supply. I do not know whether I may regard Supply as non-contentious. As to the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, some objection is taken to the form of a Schedule in that Bill. My right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury has taken measures to have that Bill restored to its original form, and therefore I hope there will be no further objection to it. The Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill is a measure to which, I think, no objection is taken, and the Copyhold Consolidation Bill is in a similar position. With regard to the Coal Mines (Check Weigher) Bill, I believe it is desired to make some observations upon it, but it is not substantially opposed. The measures I have mentioned—with the two exceptions I have indicated—are, I believe, strictly non-contentious. I understand that with reference to other Bills not promoted by the Government, they will not be proceeded with, and the time of the House shall not be confined to those Bills to which I have now referred. I do not know that I have anything further to say on the subject. Later on, perhaps, it may be necessary, as is usual when we get still nearer the close of the Session, to have a general Order suspending the Twelve o'clock Rule, not with a view to late Sittings, but in order to conclude the business.

***Sir M. HICKS-BEACH** (Bristol, W.): Are we to understand that to-night and to-morrow will be devoted to the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, and Supply be taken on Wednesday?

Sir W. HARCOURT: No; India comes after the Eight Hours Bill. I am not at the present moment in a position to say what time will be required for the discussion of the Eight Hours Bill, but as soon as that is over we shall proceed with the Indian discussion and then with Supply.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): Can the right hon. Gentleman fix a date for the Education Vote?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I think it would be very inconvenient to take Supply otherwise than in its regular course.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the vast majority of the Irish Members are in favour of the Local Courts of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill, and that it is only opposed by a small knot of Dublin solicitors?

SIR W. HARCOURT: I am afraid it does not come within the category of unopposed Bills, especially if it is opposed by solicitors.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): Do we understand that the discussion on India on Wednesday is contingent upon the passing of the Eight Hours Bill through all its stages to-day or to-morrow?

SIR W. HARCOURT: If all the stages were finished to-day the Indian business would be taken to-morrow.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 351.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) moved the following new clause:—

(Provision for intermediate Census.)

"(1) A Census shall be taken for the purpose of ascertaining the number of persons present within each parish in the Administrative County of London on the night of Sunday, the 29th day of March, 1896, and the provisions of The Census (England and Wales) Act, 1890, including the penal provisions, shall, subject to such modifications as may be prescribed for the purposes of this Act, apply in the case of the Census so taken as if it were taken in pursuance of that Act; except that the expenses certified by the Registrar General to have been incurred in respect of the Census shall be paid by the London County Council out of the Equalisation Fund, and the amount to be apportioned among the sanitary districts for determining the grant due shall be proportionately reduced.

(2) The authority making the poor rate in each such parish shall, in every year, make to the Local Government Board a Return of the total number of houses entered in the rate book of their parish. The Return shall be made at such time and in such form, and the numbers shall be ascertained, and the Return shall be verified, in such manner as may be prescribed. The Local Government Board shall forward such Returns to the Registrar General, and thereupon he shall estimate the population of the parish on the 6th day of April in that year, and the population so estimated shall for the purposes of this Act be the population of the parish during the 12 months beginning on that day."

(3) Provided that the first Return under this section, and a like Return with reference to the year 1891, shall be made within six weeks after the passing of this Act, and the population estimated upon the basis of such Returns shall for the purposes of this Act be the population of the parish for the year beginning on the 6th day of April, 1894.

(4) If any authority making the poor rate fail to make a Return under this section within one month after the time at which such Return is required, each of the persons constituting the authority who is in fault shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £50, and not exceeding £10 for every day during which the failure continues after the first conviction for such failure."

The right hon. Gentleman said it would be seen that under the new clause the Census would take place on the 29th of March. The cost was estimated at £6,400. The Local Government Board proposed that an estimate of the population should be taken in the years intervening between the Quinquennial Census for the purposes of the Bill, and the Local Authorities were to advise the Registrar General as to the number of houses in the various districts. Under those circumstances, he would be able to make a fairly accurate estimate of the population year by year. The Board believed that a Census every five years would be sufficient to meet the purposes of the Bill.

MR. GOSCHEN (St. George's, Hanover Square) said, the clause certainly carried out the general undertaking given by the right hon. Gentleman, and he had no observation to make upon it, except one; and that was to ask the right hon. Gentleman why he had chosen Sunday as the day upon which to take the Census? Sunday was a day which, in London, did not give so fair a view of the resident inhabitants as any other day. There were certain townships which would certainly be weakened in population by taking Sunday for the Census day. He understood that the particular day was the Sunday before Easter, and he must say he did not think that would be a convenient day. A Sunday ought not to be taken at all except for some special consideration.

*MR. COHEN said, he should like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman had assured himself that six weeks was a sufficient period to give the Local Authorities for the preparation of the first Returns? Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would say whether he had made any inquiry.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, he had no desire for a voluminous Census at the quinquential interval, and he was sure that a Census of the kind suggested would be of great assistance. They knew that the General Census had proved very wide of the estimate. The Registrar General had, no doubt, made the best calculation he could from the materials at his command; but he hoped that in the future there would be considerable assistance, in London at all events, arising from this Quinquennial Census.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, that in some parishes of London, and especially in Hampstead, where the population was steadily increasing, to take the Census on Sunday, particularly at the time of Easter, would place them at a great disadvantage, for a large number of people would be out of town. He would like to ask the President of the Local Government Board what was meant by the allusion in the second line of Sub-section 3?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he had chosen Sunday because it was in accordance with the universal practice to take them upon that day. The Registrar General had informed him that there were certain conveniences in taking the Census on a Sunday. He had selected the Sunday before Easter, instead of the Sunday after Easter, as a small concession to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square. That would be fair, at all events, to some parishes, and especially St. George's, Hanover Square. With regard to the question raised by the hon. Member for Islington, the Local Government Board had carefully considered whether six weeks would be sufficient. All that the Local Authorities would have to do was to fill in the number of houses rated, which was not a very large work, and ought very well to be concluded in six weeks.

Motion agreed to.

Clause read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be added to the Bill."

MR. GOSCHEN said, he could not pretend to be satisfied with the small concession that the President of the Board of Trade had made. It would be more proper to take this Quinquennial Census on some other day than Sunday. As he had said, on that day a large proportion of the population would be out of London. However, the right hon. Gentleman was master of the position, and he (Mr. Goschen) did not propose to move any Amendment, because he was afraid that in the present condition of the House it would be impossible to obtain a majority. In the interests of his constituents he repeated he did not think Sunday a well-chosen day for the Census.

Motion agreed to.

Clause added to the Bill.

MR. GOSCHEN proposed an Amendment omitting from line 6 the words "form a fund" in relation to the Equalisation Fund, in order to insert "open an account," contending that the latter was the more proper description of what was really done.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 6, to leave out the words "form a fund," and insert the words "open an account." —(*Mr. Goschen.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'form a fund' stand part of the Bill."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, he had carefully considered this matter, and although the description "open an account" might properly describe the operation in the earlier sections, it did not describe the transactions later on, and "fund" was the proper expression. The Government had a precedent for the term they had chosen in the Act of 1870, for which the right hon. Gentleman opposite was responsible, where the expression used was "the Common Poor Law Fund."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

On Motion of Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Clause 1, page 2, line 18, leave out "tender," and insert "render."

Line 28, leave out "If any Sanitary Authority is found by," and insert "Where."

Line 29, leave out "to have made default within the meaning of," and insert "under."

Line 30, after "1891," insert—

"are satisfied that a Sanitary Authority have been guilty of such default as in that section mentioned, and have made an order limiting a time for the performance of the duty of the authority."

Line 32, leave out "grant," and insert "payment."

Line 38, after "year," insert—

"and the amount to be apportioned among the sanitary districts for determining the grant due shall be proportionately increased."

Clause 2, page 3, line 3, leave out "an equalisation charge," and insert "a receipt under this Act."

Clause 3, page 3, line 12, after "being," insert—

"including the Census taken in pursuance of this Act, or in any year in which a Census is not taken according to the population estimated by the Registrar General under this Act."

After line 12, insert—

"The expression 'prescribed' means prescribed by the Local Government Board."

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE asked to be allowed to move the Third Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Shaw-Lefevre.*)

*MR. COHEN said, he did not wish to delay the Third Reading of the Bill. He wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman for having incorporated into the Bill an Amendment which he set down in almost his own words. So far as his opinion went, he thought the Bill would be advantageous to the Metropolis, less on account of its equalising results, which he did not think would be considerable, than on account of the requirement that the authorities should render a statutory account of the mode in which they had spent on the various services the grant out of the Equalisation Fund. The account required to be rendered would probably do as much to equalise rates in the true sense of the term as any other provision of the Bill, because it would bring to light the differences in the expenditure by the various parishes on these services which he pointed out in Committee. The right hon. Gentleman would not give them the control they asked for; but the very fact of the rendering of an account being made compulsory would, he was convinced, operate as a check on some extravagantly disposed Local Authorities. Out of the 40 authorities enumerated in the Parliamentary Return, no less than 21 did not give a separate return of the amount spent on lighting. In these cases lighting was included in the general rate, and, as they all knew, lighting was just one of those services in which extravagance or luxury was possible without saying it was indulged in. He thought it would be a great advantage to have this expenditure included in a Parliamentary Return, and he was quite sure it would be extremely instructive to know how much of the Equalisation Fund was spent on the various services, so that Parliament might know to what extent this Bill had accomplished the end they all desired—namely, that of an aid to sanitary expenditure, especially in the poorer districts. In his view the success of the Bill would not be tested so much by its equalising results, which would not be large, as by the effect it produced on the efficient administration of the sanitation of London, which he hoped might be both lasting and important.

MR. GOSCHEN said, that whatever the opinion might be, with regard to the usefulness of the measure, of those hon. Members who sat on his side of the House, they certainly felt that they had done their best to limit the evil results that they saw would arise under the provisions of the Bill as it first came before the House. While he could not regard the Bill in the same rosy light as the hon. Member for Islington did, he believed it to be a genuine and honest effort on the part of the Government to introduce some reform in local finance and other matters directly connected with it.

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE felt that many wise Amendments had been brought forward by those who in the first instance opposed the Bill, and he begged to thank hon. Members for the assistance they had given him, which had enabled him to effect many important alterations in the Bill.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL. (No. 156.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 10th August.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 22, after the word "mentioned," to insert the words—

"but the Board of Trade may, if they think fit, extend the said period of six months with respect to any complaints made to them during that period."

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH said, he only agreed with this Amendment so far as this Bill was concerned. Did he understand that this Amendment only applied to complaints arising under the Bill now before the House?

MR. SHAW-LEFEVRE said, yes, that was so.

*MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, he had no doubt this clause would be accepted by the House, but he desired to point out that it must be accepted as a compromise, not as to the whole matters in dispute as between the traders and the Railway Companies, but a compromise with regard to only a portion of the matters in dispute. It did not deal with two subjects which received special consideration before the Select Committee—namely, the question of risk notes and the composition of the tribunal which was to decide matters of this kind. The Committee reported that the question of the risk notes of Railway Companies required consideration and alteration, and also pointed to other matters equally needing revision. This clause, therefore, did not settle the dispute, but dealt with only one portion of the dispute. As to the method with which it dealt with this one portion, he could not say he thought it altogether satisfactory to the traders. He did not now propose to go into details, but he could only regard the sub-section, which compelled the payment by the claimant within 14 days of the 1892 rate, as one which would work unfairly, and he thought that injustice would be done under the sub-section if it became law as they amended it on Friday night, on the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol (Sir M. Hicks-Beach). What would occur under that sub-section of the Bill as it stood was this: At present the 1892 rate was taken as the standard rate for traders. Presently an increase on the 1892 rate, which had not been challenged, would be taken as the standard rate; presently an increase on the increase, which had not been challenged, would be taken as the standard rate. Under those circumstances, he could not regard the compromise as altogether a happy one; but as it was important that the Bill should be passed through Committee that night, he should not ask the Committee to disagree with the clause.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he desired to support the remarks of the hon. Member who had just spoken. He thought they had a right to complain, and ought to complain, of the manner in which this great and important question had been treated by the Government. Last year the predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade told them that a Committee was to be appointed in order to accelerate the dealing with this important question in the interests of the traders. They were told the Committee would only sit for a few days, and they would then make a Report, and that upon that Report legislation would be immediately proceeded with. Many of them were not satisfied with the Report of the Select Committee, and he thought that if the Committee itself and the terms of Reference had been widened they might have had a Report which would have proved a good basis for legislative action. The interests of traders all over the country were such as to require the Government to give them proper and fair and reasonable time to discuss this question in the House; as it was they were driven to the fag-end of the Session when many Members were worn out, and were not able to be present to give them their assistance on this question. Traders could not regard this as a satisfactory measure, and he would not have accepted this clause if they had not been driven into a corner by the Government. They were, however, obliged to accept it, as it was in the power of the Railway Companies to press them for those rates which, even by the admission of the Committee, were excessive. He accepted the Bill simply as being better than nothing at all, but he claimed to have an early re-consideration of the whole question. He hoped sufficient time would be allowed between this and the Report stage to enable them to fully consider the clause as amended, because he doubted very much whether the Amendment would quite harmonise with the clause.

*MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, he would like to take that opportunity of saying that the action he had felt himself compelled to take with regard to this Bill was largely due to the fact that this year he happened to represent, as their Chairman, the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture, and it must be well within the knowledge of many Members of the House that the Central Chamber had passed many resolutions demanding a much more stringent clause than the present one, demanding legislation that would give the right of appeal to traders in the case of all rates, and that it had also passed resolutions in the present year condemning in the most emphatic way the inadequate Report of the Select Committee and condemning this Bill, which was more or less based upon that Report. He thought these resolutions of an important Agricultural Body, representing many farmers and many large societies of the country, had deserved a fuller consideration, and should have received a fuller consideration, from the Government and the House than they had. He must express a hope that before they parted with this Bill they would have some more definite assurance than that which had already been given by his right hon. Friend that this stop-gap Bill was not the end of this question. With regard to the action of the Railway Companies in reference to this Bill, and the changes which they had managed to obtain in it, he ventured to say that a large section of the country would be convinced that the Railway Companies had, as usual, got the best of them in regard to the essential questions at issue. The Railway Companies had been enabled to assert their influence with the Board of Trade in a way prejudicial to the interests of the trade of this country, and had practically secured for themselves and for their shareholders greater consideration than even the very inadequate Report of the Select Committee of last year would have led the country to expect. He would like to point out what the situation was that had arisen. They were asked to afford this small relief to traders now, and they were asked to afford it on the strength of the Report which condemned in the most emphatic terms the whole policy and conduct of the Railway Companies in using the powers which Parliament and the Board of Trade most unfortunately placed in their hands. The Report made it perfectly clear that the Railway Companies entered into undertakings with the Board of Trade which they violated by the outrageous increase of rates carried out at the beginning of 1893. He did say, therefore, that they must have an understanding with the Government that this stop-gap measure was not the completion of the duty of Parliament, and of the Government with regard to this question, and that when the question of the reconstitution of the Railway Commission came under the review of Parliament, as it must shortly, they would have an adequate and complete investigation of and decision on all these questions, and thus supplement what was imperfect and inadequate in the present Bill. He must take great exception to the Amendments which were rushed upon the House at the very last moment on Friday night, without being even placed on the Paper, at the instance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol. He did not think it was fair in treating this Bill as an uncontested measure to have Amendments introduced——

THE CHAIRMAN said, he must draw the hon. Member's attention to the fact that he must discuss the clause as it was. He could not discuss how particular Amendments came to be introduced.

MR. CHANNING asked if he could not discuss the clause with the Amendment as it now stood?

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member could not discuss the manner in which Amendments came to be introduced to in the Bill.

*MR. CHANNING said, he would discuss that portion of the clause in which the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol was embodied. Of course, it might be contended by the right hon. Gentleman that his intention was to provide for the case in which the existing rate might have been below the actual rate of 1892, and that in that case the Amendment would operate in favour of the trader, and that he would not be called upon to pay into Court the whole of the rate liable to be charged above the rate of 1892, but only to pay the rate which was actually being levied upon him and demanded from him by the Company immediately before the increase was made. So far that might be an advantage to the trader, but the words were liable to a very different construction and to a very different operation. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would take this opportunity of further explaining the intention of this Amendment, in which case the time of the House would be usefully occupied. The difficulty, he would point out, was this. They might have an increase made upon the rate of 1892. That increase might have been left uncontested by the trader. For various reasons he might not have taken some of the increases made last year before the Railway Commissioners under the powers of this Bill. In that case, if the Railway Company saw their way to make a still further increase on any class of traffic, under the wording of the clause as it at present stood, it was perfectly plain that the trader would be called upon to pay into Court, not the old rate of 1892, but the whole of the increase which, for various reasons, he might not have seen his way to challenge in the interval. The Railway Companies would, in fact, by the form of words now introduced into the clause, have a sanction for the increased rate as well as the rate of 1892. He did say that the Bill was objectionable enough already to the traders all over the country because of its fundamental principle, which introduced a sanction of the rates of 1892, and this mischief would be still more aggravated for the traders, if the Railway Companies were enabled, as the words might enable them, in case one of the increases of their rates was not immediately challenged under this Bill before the Railway Commissioners, and they made any further increases to secure, by a side wind, this result: that not only the rate of 1892, but the whole of the increase upon the rate of 1892 should be made unassailable and unquestionable before the Railway Commissioners. It was perfectly true that the Amendment only affected money paid into Court, but that might create a presumption against the jurisdiction of the Commissioners over the increase on the rate of 1892. Unless the explanation of those words was satisfactory, or unless words could be introduced which would remove and make wholly impossible the difficulty which had occurred to him in this connection, and which might operate very prejudicially to the traders in the future, he should feel it his duty to offer the most strenuous opposition to the further passing of this Bill.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) said, he had no wish to go into the general question. They might discuss it that night and the next day also before they arrived at any common understanding or conclusion with regard to it. He had the honour to be a Member of the Committee which made the Report on which this Bill was founded. He concurred in that Report, which was supported by a very considerable majority, in favour of a limited discretion to the Railway Commissioners in dealing with the cases of increases of rates, and not throwing open all rates to question in the Railway Commissioners Court. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire and other hon. Members had questioned certain words which, at his suggestion, were inserted in the clause late on Friday night. He should have been very glad if he could have placed them on the Paper so that hon. Members might have seen them. But the fact was, that his own attention was only called to the wording of the Amendment which was to be moved by his right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University on Friday afternoon, so that he had no opportunity of doing so. What appeared to him, and what he believed also appeared to right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and to the experienced permanent officials of the Board of Trade, was that as the Amendment of his right hon. Friend stood it only had regard to those cases in which the Railway Companies had, as had often been complained, raised the rates of 1892 on the 1st of January, 1893, and that those who framed the Amendment had omitted to consider those cases of future increases which, of course, if made, would be subject to redress by the Court of the Railway Commissioners. Of course, as the hon. Member for Northamptonshire had just observed, supposing a rate existed at a certain point on the 31st December, 1892, was then raised on the 1st of January, 1893, and was subsequently lowered after that time, and then raised again to a point below that of the 31st of December, 1892, as the clause stood the traders would have been seriously damnified. Again, only a portion of their rates were raised by the Railway Companies on the 1st of January, 1893, when they endeavoured, as the Committee reported, to recoup themselves for certain diminutions which the Act of 1888 made in their power to charge in some matters by raising their previous rates on other articles on which they had the power to do so. But with regard to those rates which were not raised on the 1st of January, 1893? Supposing the Railway Companies were to lower them? No one would complain; but if, after they had lowered any of those rates, they afterwards tried to increase them, then it would be obviously unfair to call upon the trader, before his appeal could be heard, to pay into Court the rate calculated on a higher basis than that which existed at the time of the increase being made against which he appealed. That was the object of his Amendment. He believed the words as inserted in the clause carried out that without doing any harm to the trader at all. But he quite admitted the question was one of a complicated and difficult nature; and so far as he was personally concerned, if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade should be advised by those who were very well qualified to advise him that any alteration of those words would be fairer to the traders or fairer to both parties, he certainly should raise no objection to them being altered. His sole object in moving the Amendment was to make the proposal of his right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University, who he thought was very capable of taking care of the Railway Companies, more favourable to the traders than it was in the shape he moved it. He believed it carried that out; but if it did not, it was perfectly open to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to alter it later on.

Mr. CHANNING: I would like to ask my right hon. Friend the Member for Bristol whether words to this effect would meet his view?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Gentleman is competent to do that.

Mr. KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN (Kent, Faversham) said, he only wished to say, on behalf of the agricultural interest, that he did not think the agriculturists of this country were of opinion that this Bill was much worthy of their acceptance. They could not regard it as a complete, or equitable, or fair settlement of this question, and they would undoubtedly look to future legislation to remove those grievances and inequalities which they thought would still exist.

*Mr. MUNDELLA (Sheffield, Brightside) said, he was responsible for the introduction of this Bill, and his name was on the back of it. He believed that the changes that had been made in the Bill, on the whole, made it a very fair and reasonable settlement of the question. The Bill now fairly carried out the recommendations of the Committee. He had looked at it very carefully, and he could not find that it in any way fell short of the Committee's Report. The hon. Member for Maldon (Mr. Dodd) had said that it failed to reconstitute the Railway Commission. They all knew why it did not deal with that question. The Committee itself made no recommendations on that subject, but there was no doubt that the Commission must be reconstituted. It was not satisfactory. He did not think it was satisfactory to gentlemen sitting on either side of the House, or to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol himself. When the first opportunity presented itself for the reconstitution of the Commission there was no doubt it would be so constituted as to make the

Commission more acceptable to the traders and the community generally. But, with respect to the action of the Railway Companies in raising the rates, no one had suffered more than he had, and he resented their action as much as the hon. Members (Mr. Channing and Mr. Dodd), but he believed that, so far from this being a mere stop-gap Bill, it was a much more important Bill than Mr. Channing considered. If it was a stop-gap Bill, the gap it occupied was a very important one, and it was a gap that the traders themselves wanted stopping. The Board of Trade had received innumerable letters, memorials, and deputations urging that the increase made on the rates of 1892 should be subject to revision; and he believed it to be a great satisfaction to the traders to have that question finally settled. He could not recall an instance in which they demanded that the whole rates should be opened. What they desired was that the rates which were raised by the action of the Railway Companies—he might say the capricious action of the Railway Companies — on the 1st of January, 1893, should be subject to revision, and that they should be reduced. He believed that, so far from the Board of Trade being subject to the pressure of the Railway Companies, great pressure had been brought to bear by the Board of Trade on the Railway Companies themselves. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bryce) had carried through the negotiations with great firmness, and he thought the Railway Companies had really behaved at the last moment with considerable moderation and reasonableness. He believed the Bill, with the Amendments in it, would give satisfaction to the trading community; and with the operation of Section 31, which was constantly in operation and constantly doing excellent work in reducing typical rates, he believed the Bill offered a very important opening for the revision of any unreasonable rates to which the traders might be subjected.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, that with reference to what had fallen from several hon. Members with regard to the Amendment settled on Friday night, he desired to assure the hon. Member for Northamptonshire and the hon. Member for Essex that what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol was perfectly accurate. This Amendment was introduced in the interests of traders, because it was plain that the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University as it stood did not deal with one case in which they might be prejudiced. He did not think the Amendment was inequitable to the trader in the way in which his hon. Friends had pointed out, and he could assure them that it in no way affected the right of the traders, which was safeguarded under Clause 1. He would like to assure his hon. Friends that the words accepted on Friday had been very carefully considered; but he would, with those who advised him in this matter, carefully consider whether the danger which they apprehended could possibly arise; and if they were of opinion that it would arise, he would see what words could be introduced to guard against it. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire was entirely mistaken if he thought the Board of Trade had been influenced in this matter by the Railway Companies. On the contrary, the Board of Trade had put a great deal of pressure on the Railway Companies. The reason he pressed the Bill, which was not all he could desire himself, was because he believed that in the circumstances it was the most that could be effected, and that if it passed it would give a very substantial advantage to traders of which in the months to come they would reap the advantage.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he was surprised at the remark of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Sheffield that the traders would be quite satisfied to have the rates of 1892 fixed.

*MR. MUNDELLA said, that what he said was, that all the complaints which reached him when he was at the Board of Trade was with reference to the excesses upon the rates of 1892, and that the applications to the Board of Trade were that those excesses should be reduced—not that the whole of the rates should be re-opened.

*MR. TOMLINSON said, he must remind the right hon. Gentleman that at the deputation which waited upon him in one of the Committee Rooms, great dissatisfaction was felt that the Bill was so narrow in its scope, and that at that time he tried to pacify some of those who felt so strongly upon the matter by telling them that the Bill was so framed that it would re-open the whole question. He did lead them to expect that where the rate had been increased after 1892 it would be open to the traders to open the whole rate on the ground of reasonableness. They were certainly led to expect, when the Bill was brought in, that it would be open, under its provisions, to raise the question of the reasonableness of the whole rate.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said that, as Chairman of the Committee that investigated this matter, and as the one who drew up the Report, he desired to say a few words. He desired to point out that the whole of the evidence was confined to the raising of the rates since 1892. He believed he was right in saying that there was no evidence whatever brought before the Committee in respect of any other rates than those that had been raised at the beginning of 1893. He thought it might be well worthy of consideration at some future time whether the operation of this Bill might not be extended. If it were extended, it must be after full inquiry as to the rates which existed other than those which were raised in 1893. But certainly it would not have been right for the Committee to have reported with regard to rates in respect of which there was no evidence before them, and which were outside the scope of the Reference. He was bound to say that the evidence in regard to those rates was not by any means complete.

*MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, he thought his right hon. Friend must have forgotten the last words of the Reference to the Committee, which gave them a perfect right to go into the whole question of the revision of rates.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe) appealed very strongly to the President of the Board of Trade to scrutinise closely the words of the Amendment, because some words had crept into the Act of 1888 which had had an entirely unanticipated effect as against the traders and which had proved most dangerous to the interests of the traders. It must be borne in mind that the Railway Companies had the most experienced legal assistance, and knew the effect of every word they suggested to the President of the Board of Trade. He believed the professional advisers at the back of the Railway Companies were far superior to those at the back of the President of the Board of Trade, and he thought, therefore, that the Government would do well to be careful as to the words they adopted. He regretted very much that the Government had thought fit to proceed with this Bill at this period of the Session, as it was a most important measure.

MR. BURNIE (Swansea Town) said, the Members of the Committee had consisted largely of Railway Directors and friends of Railway Companies, and yet an Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Banbury (Sir B. Samuelson) was accepted, and this clause was inserted, commencing, "The minimum the trader is entitled to." It was upon this provision that Parliament was basing its legislation. He did not agree in the censure that had been passed upon the Report of the Committee. He regarded it as an excellent historical Report, although he thought the recommendations it contained were weak.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 2.

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, no doubt in some cases, perhaps in many, it might be an advantage to traders not to have the question of costs determined by the tribunal, but at the same time he regarded the provision as being a two-edged sword. He thought it an extraordinary thing that the tribunal could not be trusted to deal with the question of costs.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I do not think my hon. Friend is fair, if he will allow me to say so, in suggesting that this clause shows any want of confidence on the part of the Select Committee in the tribunal. That was not the point at all. It was alleged, and I believe it was very strongly felt by the traders, that, whereas the Railway Companies could afford to retain the services of the very best solicitors and barristers at the highest possible fees, the private litigant in many cases could not do so, and it was regarded as hard that such a litigant should have to pay the costs of the Railway Companies on a high scale if the decision happened to be against him. The Committee therefore considered that the rule which, I believe, obtains in our Committee Rooms upstairs should be enforced in this case. Whatever may be thought of the Railway Commissioners as a tribunal, I may say that they cheerfully accepted this proposal, and in fact approved of it in their evidence before the Committee.

*Mr. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, he considered the clause to be mistaken, inasmuch as it meant that if a complainant was ever so right, he could not have his costs. He preferred the ordinary English rule, that the man who won got his costs, while the man who lost had to pay them. The Report of the Committee, he thought, made it plain that the question of the composition of the tribunal, the Railway Commission, must shortly be considered, and that showed that the clause dealt only with a very provisional state of circumstances, and that the whole of this question would before long come again before Parliament. Under these circumstances, having expressed his own opinion on the clause, he would not vote against it.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Mr. BRYCE moved to insert the following clause:—

(Amendment of 36 & 37 Vic., c. 48, s. 14, as to division of rates.)

"The provisions of Section 14 of The Regulation of Railways Act, 1873, with respect to the power to make orders and failure to comply with such orders, shall extend to any rates entered in books kept in pursuance of Section 34 of The Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888."

He said, this clause was necessary owing to an omission from the Act of 1888, and it had been accepted by both parties.

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. CHANNING asked whether the clause would cover the objects of the clauses which stood in the name of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton with regard to the analysis of rates, private sidings, and so on?

Mr. BRYCE said, it would. The clause was really based upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton. It had been very carefully considered by the Government draftsman, and by the representatives of the traders, who were agreed that it carried out the object of the hon. Member's Amendment.

*Mr. TOMLINSON said, he thought the clause would furnish a very valuable amendment in the law.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause added to the Bill.

*Mr. CHANNING moved the insertion of the following new clause:—

(Duration of Act.)

"This Act shall remain in force till the 1st day of January, 1898, and no longer."

He said, if it were thought desirable that the measure should continue in operation after the period named it might be included in the Temporary Bills Act afterwards.

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, his right hon. Friend the Member for Dublin University (Mr. D. Plunket) had asked him to say that he hoped the Government would not accept this clause. It was not one of those proposals upon which the Railway Companies looked with favour, and he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) hoped the House would limit itself to those Amendments which had been agreed to by both parties.

Mr. BRYCE said, he must refuse to accept the Amendment, not because the Railway Companies objected to it, but because he thought on its merits it was not a desirable proposal. He thought that the Debates that had taken place, and the opinions that had been expressed by the traders, would be a sufficient record of the fact that they had not accepted this Bill as one that was satisfactory to them. As to the suggestion of his hon. Friend (Mr. Channing), he did not think it advisable to overload the Expiring Laws Continuance Act with Bills.

Motion and Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BRYCE moved the following new clause:—

(Rebate on sidings rates.)

"Whenever merchandise is received or delivered by a Railway Company at any siding or branch railway not belonging to the Company and a dispute arises between the Railway Company and the consignor or consignee of such merchandise as to any allowance or rebate to be made from the rates charged to such consignor or consignee in respect that the Railway Company does not provide station accommodation or perform terminal services, the Railway and Canal Commissioners shall have jurisdiction to hear and determine such dispute, and to determine what, if any, is a reasonable and just allowance or rebate."

Clause brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

***Mr. TOMLINSON** asked for an explanation of the differences between the proposed new clause and one on the same subject which had been placed upon the Paper by the hon. Member for Leicester (Sir J. Whitehead). He wished to know whether the words "at any siding or branch railway not belonging to the Company" were not rather ambiguous? Supposing a siding or a branch railway were leased by a Railway Company, would that be regarded as not belonging to the Railway Company?

Mr. BRYCE: The differences between the Amendment of the hon. Baronet the Member for Leicester (Sir J. Whitehead) and my own are only differences of drafting. The words "not belonging to the Company" have been used in other Acts relating to this matter, and would cover the case of a siding that was leased—that is to say, that such a siding would not be excluded. The clause has been accepted by those who represent the traders, and I think the form in which it has been drafted will be found to be the most convenient and the safest.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clause added to the Bill.

Mr. Bryce

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 356.]

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—(No. 10.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 30th April.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

***Sir J. PEASE** (Durham, Barnard Castle) moved that the Chairman do leave the Chair. He remarked that this Bill had come on the 13th of August, at a period of the Session when the House was, in his humble opinion, unable properly to weigh the very serious matters that were contained in it. He was thoroughly well acquainted with the subject, and he felt a great dread of legislation of this most important character being brought forward at a time when so many Members had paired and gone away, being unable to believe that Her Majesty's Government would afford facilities on the 13th of August for a Bill of this very great and important character. He was certain that the adoption of the Bill would add very largely to the cost of the article produced by the miners, and the result would be to increase the depression of trade, which they all so much deplored. He saw in the Lancashire newspapers statements to the effect that mills in that county were lying idle, no there and there but in groups; and he knew that in his own district ironworks were being stopped because of the competition with Belgium and other countries. Under these circumstances, he asked whether it would be wise to proceed with a Bill which, in his belief, must add to the cost of production? Another grave and important question for consideration was what effect the Bill would have upon the employment of workmen in this country. He believed its effect would be very much to diminish the number of men employed. Those who were thus thrown out of work would go into other districts which were already over-populated, and further reduce wages.

Mr. P. STANHOPE (Burnley), rising to Order, asked whether the hon. Baronet had a right to make a Second Reading speech on the Bill?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Baronet is not entitled to discuss the Bill at all at this moment. He must confine himself to reasons for his Motion.

*Sir J. PEASE said, he was endeavouring to give reasons for reporting Progress. The Bill would have a much greater effect upon the country than the Budget of the present year; and when he remembered how many Members had paired and saw how thin the House was, he contended that they were not in a position to give all the attention they ought to give to a subject of such vast importance. The Government had taken the unusual course of granting facilities for a private Members' Bill, whilst they were leaving over for another year Bills which had been announced in the Queen's Speech, and which were of a much more national character than that now before the Committee. It was a most unusual course for the House at so late a period of the Session to take up a Bill of so important a character, and especially one that would interfere with the rights of adult labour.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Sir J. Pease.*)

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): Of course, I cannot go into the earlier topics dealt with by my hon. Friend in his speech, as they really did seem to me to be arguments against the Second Reading of the Bill. At an earlier period of the Session, when the House was very full, the principle of the Bill was affirmed by a very large majority, and, therefore, I think we can put aside all the earlier reasons given by my hon. Friend for having made this Motion. I would ask the Committee whether it is not the desire of the great majority of Members to deal with this Bill, and to deal with it now? If the Committee is not of that opinion it has the opportunity of expressing its view upon the Motion of my hon. Friend. Everybody has had full notice for weeks past that this Bill was to be dealt with, and there has throughout the country been a full expectation that it would be considered to-day. I think it would be a matter of great surprise and disappointment to the many thousands of people, on whose behalf my hon. Friend professes to speak, if it were found that the House of Commons was not willing to entertain the question to-day. Miners have for a long time looked forward to the discussion of this question, and would resent it if the Committee now determined not to consider a matter which has so long been pending. Those are the reasons why I for my part cannot assent to the Motion of my hon. Friend; but of course it is for the Committee to say whether or not they desire to proceed with this stage of the Bill.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR (Leeds, Central) said, he thought the Motion of the hon. Baronet was fully justified by the circumstances of the case. It appeared to him to be little short of a public scandal that a Bill of that important kind—not being a Government Bill—should receive facilities for discussion from the Government at a time so late in the Session, when practically the only proper business which remained to be got through was the business of Supply—a time moreover when probably more than half the Members of the House were paired and away. The hon. Baronet had emphasised, as he was justified in doing, the importance of the Bill, which introduced a most novel principle and was brought forward in the interests of a section of the community—indeed, he might say of a portion of a section of the community, although it must profoundly affect the interests of the community generally. The Bill dealt with an industry which numbered 600,000 workers—an industry which provided a cheap and abundant supply of fuel without which the great industries of the country, on which their prosperity depended, could not be carried on. He would like to ask what discussion the Bill had received up to the present time? The only discussion which it had received was the extremely imperfect and perfunctory discussion of two Wednesday afternoon Debates. This showed that the Bill had not received mature consideration. He did not hesitate to say that a Bill of this extreme importance and far-reaching character should not receive facilities under any circumstances unless the Government of the day not only ensured that it should have mature consideration, but were prepared to take the responsibility upon themselves of making it a Government measure. But he contended above all that facilities ought not to be given to such a measure at a time like this. It was notorious that pairs were made on Party grounds. What did that mean? It meant that at the present time the House did not fairly represent the balance of opinion in regard to that Bill, or any Bill which was not drawn upon Party lines. These considerations seemed so obvious that one could not help asking what were the reasons which had induced the Government to give this Bill exceptional facilities? When the Leader of the House announced that it was his intention to give this Bill exceptional facilities, he offered to the House two reasons for doing so. One of these was that the supporters of the Bill had obtained an exceptionally favourable place by means of the ballot, and the other was that the Bill raised important questions which it was desirable should be submitted this year to the judgment of the House of Commons. If the first of those reasons was to prevail and form a standing precedent for future occasions it was clear that every year there would be half-a-dozen Bills or more which it would be necessary for the Government to add to their programme or to give exceptional facilities for, even at the end of the Session. As to the second reason—that the Bill raised important issues which should be decided by the House of Commons—that was an argument against giving facilities, not in favour of doing so. If a Bill raised important considerations it was all the more important that it should be brought forward at a time when the House could fairly debate those important considerations. If it was desirable that the judgment of the House should be expressed upon it, let it be expressed at a time when the House fairly represented the division of opinion in the House upon the question at issue. He thought it was impossible to doubt that the real reason why the Government had given these exceptional facilities to the Bill was that the noble Lord who was at the head of the Government, early in the year, at a time when the Government seemed to have given very little consideration to the Bill, and when he must have been very imperfectly acquainted with the views of his colleagues upon the Bill, gave a promise that the measure should receive exceptional facilities. He, of course, understood the difficulty of the position in which the Government was placed owing to those pledges given by its head. But the Government had duties to the public and to the House as well as to a section of its followers, and he thought the interests of the public and the House demanded that the Bill should not be discussed at that late period of the Session. He could hardly expect the Members of the Government themselves to support the Motion, but he thought they might fairly ask that they should not influence their followers to vote against it, and that if the Motion were carried they should agree that the Bill should no longer be proceeded with.

Sir J. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, the position of the Bill was that it had passed the Second Reading by a considerable majority. It was brought in by a private Member, and was in the category of private Members' Bills. Were there no other Bills of the same character—no other Bills which had passed that House by large majorities and were as much entitled to the special consideration of Her Majesty's Government, if not more entitled? For instance, there was the Rating of Machinery Bill, which had been approved in that House by large majorities for two or three years, which was not a Party measure, and which, in his judgment, had far more claim upon the Government than had the measure before the House. He could not quite understand the position the Government had taken up on the Bill. He had been under the impression that the Government took the whole time of the House in order to push forward the measures to which the Party was pledged, but instead of carrying those measures into effect the Government had taken the Bill selected especially from all the Bills which had been passed by large majorities and had given it preference, not only over those Bills, but over their own measures. As a supporter of the Government, and as representing a district which had returned a large number of supporters of the Government to the House, he protested against their present action. He thought they had treated with but scant courtesy the Counties of Durham and Northumberland, which had for years sent an almost unbroken phalanx of Members to represent the Liberal cause in Parliament. If the Bill had been made a Government measure Members would have known upon whose shoulders rested the responsibility of pressing it forward; but the Government seemed, for some reason or other, not to have had the courage of their convictions. He could not see why they should not have taken the responsibility of the Bill upon their own shoulders; but what had they actually done? Not only had they given special facilities for the consideration of the measure, but they had issued a four or five-line Whip for the Second Reading, and that morning again a five-line Whip had been sent out and special attention called to the Bill. He regarded the discussion of the Second Reading as absolutely inadequate to the importance of the subject. He himself, as representing a constituency deeply interested in the question, was specially anxious to give his views upon it on that occasion, and rose practically every time there was an opportunity, but he failed to catch the Speaker's eye, and in the end the Debate was closured. He strongly supported his hon. Friend's Motion, and he hoped the Government would see their way to agree to the proposal he had made.

MR. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) said, the hon. Baronet who had moved to report Progress and the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken were such faithful supporters of the Government that he was convinced they would not have taken such a course as they had adopted had they not felt bound to do so. The Chancellor of the Exchequer himself had only an hour before expressed the opinion that the inscription, "Abandon hope all ye who introduce Bills into this House in the middle of August," ought to be put up. What discussion had they actually had upon the Bill? Two miserable Wednesday afternoons in an attenuated and listless House; scarcely anyone speaking for more than 10 minutes, most of the people best worth hearing not speaking at all, and the discussion finally terminated by the closure. They had not heard the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Leader of the Opposition upon the Bill; above all, they had not heard the opinion of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. He was specially anxious to know what that right hon. Gentleman had to say, as well as the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the Under Secretary for the Home Department? As a good Party man he was ready to believe most things of the present Government, but he could never have believed that they would have assisted to rush such an important Bill through the House at that period of the Session. Apparently many other people were of the same opinion, for he noticed that of the gentlemen who had some of the most important Amendments down on the Paper, many were absent. Attention had been called to the fact that there were about 200 Sessional pairs, so that the Bill was apparently going to be decided by a House of about 100 Members. It must be borne in mind that the Bill was not only opposed from the Opposition side of the House, it was still more violently opposed by many of the Government's own supporters, and yet they were told that it was going to be rushed through the House in a couple of days. He had no hesitation in characterising the action of the Government as a Parliamentary outrage of the worst possible description.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid) suggested to the hon. Baronet who had moved that Progress be reported that, after the expression of opinion which had been evoked, he might fairly withdraw his proposition and let the Committee proceed with the discussion of the Bill. With regard to the action of the Government respecting the measure, he might say that as one of the least of the Liberal Party, he had been, in and out of the House, one of its consistent supporters. He had done his best to assist in the return to that House of Members pledged to support Liberal measures, because he believed those measures were best for the class to which they belonged; but during the present Session they had seen the most complete setting aside of any recognition of the views he and those from the North had expressed. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that sufficient time had been given to the House to allow Members to prepare themselves for that Debate. From time to time, he, with others, had put questions to the right hon. Gentleman, asking him to name the date on which the Debate would be taken, and to state, as nearly as he could, the amount of time which would be allotted to it. But there had been the most constant evasion of the questions. He had done his very best to ascertain that they might be prepared, but he ventured to say, looking at the pairs which had been made, as pairs are continually made, on Party lines, that the House was not in a state in which a question like that could be properly discussed. It seemed to him that the Government had taken upon their shoulders a burden they shrank from carrying. If they were so enamoured of the measure, why had they not made it a Government measure—why were they going to allow it to pass, with their support, as a private Member's Bill. He knew that he was expressing the opinion of a large number of working men outside when he said the opponents of the Bill had not been treated in the fairest of manners, but he would, nevertheless, advise the hon. Baronet that, having obtained that expression of opinion from both sides of the House, he should allow the Committee to proceed with the discussion of the Bill.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had the honour of representing a large mining constituency—indeed, he believed the majority of those on the Register were employed more or less in mining occupations. He had been in communication with a large number of his constituents, and he felt that it would be a grave injustice to them if the Bill were forced through the House of Commons at the present time. The feeling against the Bill was most earnest and emphatic on the part of a large proportion of the mining population—a proportion so large that, though a minority, it was entitled to the utmost respect—and he felt that the great questions involved in the measure could not receive due consideration so late in the month of August. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had reminded the Committee that the Second Reading was carried by a large majority; but the Bill was essentially a measure of detail, and many Members who supported the Second Reading were anxious to see carried important Amendments which would, in their opinion, make the Bill more effective. The discussion of those Amendments must occupy some time. The interests involved were gigantic, overwhelming, almost overpowering; and he felt that the House would not be doing justice to those affected—employers, employed, or the country at large—if they proceeded further with the measure that day. For it was not only the employers and employed in the mining districts who were concerned in the matter—there was the great body of consumers; and he was certain that the passing of the Bill would enhance the price of coal.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that is quite the question under consideration.

*SIR F. S. POWELL: I only mentioned it as an illustration of the gigantic interests involved in this question, and, therefore, as a reason why the Bill should not be discussed at this period of the Session. I am glad to have had an opportunity of making this protest, and I know I shall have the thanks of many in the borough I represent.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) said, the Leader of the House had stated that he proposed to resist the Motion, on the ground that the principle of the Bill had been affirmed by very large majorities of the House. He had taken the trouble to analyse the figures of the Divisions, and he found that in May, 1893, the number of Members who took part was 484, and that the majority was 78. In April, 1894, this year, 479 Members took part, and the majority was 87. Of the Members who voted in the Aye Lobby last year 45 were absent this year, and 63 who voted in the No Lobby last year were absent this year. One changed his vote from Aye to No. Four, owing to extreme pressure from the Government, changed their votes from No to Aye. Therefore, the total of those in favour of the Bill was 326, and of those in opposition to the Bill were 257. Those who faced both ways were five, and those who were absent altogether were 82. The majority of those who voted was therefore 69, and that did not equal the number of those who abstained from voting. He thought that if a Bill of this importance was to be proceeded with, it should only be with the support of the majority of the whole House. This had never been the case with respect to this measure, and was another reason why they should not now legislate in a hurry. In the majorities to which he had referred the Nationalist vote of 64 Members went solidly in favour of the Second Reading. He hoped that that solidity would not be maintained in any future Divisions on the Bill, for though the Nationalist Members, in voting on the Second Reading, might have believed that they were supporting a democratic principle they were not voting for the advantage of the whole community. Another reason why the Bill should not go at that late period was that the Labour Commission Report had been issued since the Second Reading Division. That Report should have due weight attached to it in the consideration of such a measure as this. But that was an advantage which they could not have at this late period of the Session.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) said, he wished to join in an appeal to the hon. Baronet not to press his Motion to a Division. A very timely protest had been entered against the action of the Government in specially facilitating the Bill, but, that protest having been entered, he did not think anything further would be gained by persisting in the Motion, and if a Division were taken upon it a wrong impression might be created. At the same time, he fully agreed with the strictures which the hon. Baronet had passed upon the shilly-shally attitude of the Government, who, he thought, had not even treated their own supporters fairly, and whose action in no way redounded to their credit. Not only had no adequate discussion taken place so far, but the country had had no opportunity of expressing an opinion either on the Bill itself or on the proposals which would be made to amend it. The Bill was not in the Government programme; it was not in the Newcastle programme. More than that, it was deliberately excluded, after full consideration, from that programme, on which, practically, the Government were returned to power. Several reasons had been given for the curious attitude of the Government, but he did not know that it was desirable to mince matters, and his own belief was that that attitude was due to the fact that several right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Ministerial Bench represented constituencies in which the mining vote was too important to be lightly treated. At the same time, the Prime Minister had given a distinct pledge that the Bill should be considered in Committee, and he would be sorry to be a party to causing the Government to break any pledges; therefore, he suggested that the Bill should be proceeded with. It was not properly discussed on the Second Reading, and that was all the more reason why they should now take the earliest opportunity of considering it fully, so that those who did not fully approve of it might point out in what respects they considered that it failed most seriously.

*Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he desired to say a word or two on behalf of a class whose interest had not been taken into view. He represented a constituency which was not directly connected with the mining industry, yet depended for its livelihood on the regular and cheap supply of coal, and all the great industries conducted in his part of the country would suffer seriously if that supply were to be diminished, as certainly he thought it would diminish if this Bill passed into law. In the textile and in the iron trades the depression was now very great, many concerns were carried on without profit, and if they were subjected to a considerable additional charge for coal it would be difficult to carry on business at all. The Bill would operate very seriously in that direction if instead of eight hours actual work in mines per day the work was reduced to 6 or 5¾ hours, which would be the actual result. The Representatives of other than mining districts had not, perhaps, given attention to the details of the Bill, and many of them had paired and were away from the House. The discussion would suffer from their absence just at the time when they could make themselves acquainted with the real working of the measure. He protested strongly against the manner in which the Bill was being pushed through.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) hoped that the hon. Baronet would not put the Committee to the inconvenience of a Division, but would yield to the appeal made to him, and withdraw the Motion to report Progress. He quite agreed that a protest against the action of the Government was called for and in stronger terms than had been used. In their own opinion the Government had made an adroit move, but, in his opinion, their conduct had been neither candid or courageous. This conduct would be noted out of doors and public attention would be secured by this Motion, which however might now be withdrawn and the discussion of the Bill allowed to proceed.

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) had no desire to comment on the action of the Government in regard to the Bill, though he could say a good deal about that. It was quite unnecessary, after the strong and cutting language which had been heard from supporters of the Government representing districts where the Government had hitherto appeared to enjoy a considerable amount of popularity. If this conduct should decrease that popularity, the Opposition could afford to look on the result with some complacency. To his mind it appeared quite indefensible that at the very moment when the Chancellor of the Exchequer had announced that it was impossible, looking at the length of the Session and the exhaustion of the House, for the Government to proceed with any single Bill of their own if it was in the slightest degree opposed, that they should ask the House to proceed with as thorny and difficult a question as could be presented to the House of Commons. But his object in rising was solely to add his request to others that had been made that the hon. Baronet would not press his Motion to a Division. Enough had been said to make sufficient protest on the part of Members against the conduct of the Government in regard to this matter, but for himself he would say that whatever might be the view taken of this Bill as the House was sitting this evening there would surely be a desire to proceed with some business or other. But if Members would look at the Order Paper having regard to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the fact that effective Supply had not been put down, it would be seen that if this Motion were carried in about 10 minutes the House would adjourn. He therefore expressed the hope that the hon. Baronet would not press the Motion to a Division, but having made his protest would allow the consideration of the Bill to proceed.

Mr. RATHBONE (Carnarvonshire, Arfon) had some hesitation in speaking on this subject, but it did seem to him a very dangerous thing for the House in its present state and under the circumstances of the time to enter upon a policy entirely novel, contrary to all precedent, and opposed to English character and traditions. The House, which was unable to discharge its own business satisfactorily, was now going to regulate the details of labour for the whole of the country in all its varied forms. ["No, no!"] That was so, because wher this new departure was understood in the country it was evident where it would lead. In other trades the question would be raised, "If miners have this restriction of hours why should not we?" The consequences would be very injurious. He was interested neither on behalf of employers or employed in this controversy, but speaking in the interest of *employés* generally he believed that this step would have the effect of endangering, and if proceeded with would largely decrease the employment and means of subsistence of large masses of our population. We were entering upon the application of a principle which statesmen of the past had considered most dangerous and objectionable. Perhaps the man who had done more than any other to promote the shortening of hours of labour was the hon. Member for Gorton (Mr. Mather), and his testimony was emphatic on this question that a rigid law passed by members of an Imperial Legislature when votes were given as required for Party reasons could never provide a safe remedy for the difficulties that arose in connection with hours of labour. This question was now brought on in a House that could not be said to represent the opinion of the country, while so many Members were absent, having no expectation that this business would be taken, and who had not a chance of returning the pledges they had given on the subject.

*Sir J. PEASE rose in response to the invitations given to ask leave to withdraw his Motion, which had served its purpose as a humble though strong protest on his part, strongly emphasised by others, against the conduct of the Government in bringing forward a Bill promoted by private Members on the 13th of August with the House in its present condition.

Mr. ABRAHAM objected to the Motion being withdrawn now that it had served its purpose. If there was any validity in the reason alleged against proceeding with the Bill that there were too few Members present, let that allegation be subjected to the test of Division. Then would be shown where was the desire to have a fair discussion and where the intention to merely obstruct the Bill and prevent its consideration.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON was very sorry the hon. Baronet was going to withdraw his protest, because a Division would have shown the country the extent and character of the support given to the Government on bringing forward so important a Bill at this period of the Session. He thought the hon. Baronet by his Motion had offered the Government a golden bridge to enable them to retire from their opposition and abandon the Bill. After the remarks of the hon. Member for Rhondda he might be allowed to express the opinion that the Bill would do a vast amount of harm to every colliery in South Wales. It was not an Eight Hours' Bill at all, it was a Seven Hours' Bill, and its effect would be to reduce work and to risk the sacrifice of life. He regretted the hon. Baronet withdrew his Motion, for it would have been well for the country to have seen, even in such a thin House, how strong was the condemnation of the conduct of the Government.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS said, if he was in Order he would, even at the risk of censure from his hon. Friend the Member for Rhondda, suggest that this clause be postponed to a later period of the discussion. He would not press this to a Division if there was very serious objection to it, but certainly as the clause stood it was a misnomer and misleading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 1 be postponed."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

MR. ROBY hoped the hon. Member would not press this. It was a matter of small importance, but "Hours of Work" seemed the natural terms in which to describe the Bill.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. J. A. PEASE asked, would it be in Order to alter the title of the Bill, which at the present did not make sense?

THE CHAIRMAN: Not now; that will come last.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS said, the clause as it stood was a misnomer and altogether misleading. It was not for "Hours of Work"; it was to regulate the hours from surface to surface, from bank to bank, or hours underground, and therefore he moved to omit the words "of work." He did not think it could be contended they were hours of work; in fact, the time of actual work would only be some six and a-half hours, the remainder of the eight hours being occupied in going down and up again, in getting to and coming from the place of actual work.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 7, to leave out the words "of work."—(*Mr. D. A. Thomas.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, the acceptance of the Amendment of which he had given notice, and which would speak for itself, would not necessarily be fatal to the Bill even in the opinion of the promoters. It was asserted that under the very peculiar circumstances the legislation the House was entering upon should be given an experimental character and less of a cast-iron form. There was a very strong precedent for his proposal in the Employers' Liability Act of 1880, to which a duration of seven years was given. At that time the fears of those who objected to the Bill were such as induced many to believe that the effect of the Bill would be bad.

MR. ROBY, interrupting, expressed his willingness to accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, before the words "a person," to insert the words "until the thirty-first of December one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine." — (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. TOMLINSON desired to substitute "1897" for "1899." The Act would be experimental, and for the purpose of experience of its operation a couple of years would be an ample period and much to be preferred to five years. Of course, what was contemplated was the possibility or probability that long before the end of 1899 was reached the Act in its operation would be found so disadvantageous to the workmen subject to it, that there would be a strong desire for its repeal. That such would be the case he was convinced, for in many parts of the country it would be impossible to carry on colliery work under these restrictions. The shorter period was therefore desirable.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "ninety-nine," and insert the words "ninety-seven."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the proposed Amendment."

MR. WOODS regretted that the hon. Member should have intervened with this after the Amendment had been so promptly accepted. He hoped it would not be persisted in, but that the Committee might be allowed to proceed to the discussion of more important Amendments.

MR. LEGH thought that a period of seven years was too long for the experiment. [Several hon. MEMBERS: "Five years."] Five years was too long for experimental purposes, and personally he should much prefer the shorter period. The Bill might have all the advantages its promoters claimed for it; it might turn out to be a benefit to everybody concerned, but on the other hand there must not be left out of consideration the possibility of its being unsuccessful. If he were allowed to do so he would like to refer to reasons which led him to express some doubt as to the effect the Bill would have on our foreign coal trade.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that to do that would be in Order.

MR. LEGH said, he was about to quote from the evidence given before the Labour Commission as to the desirability of making the Bill an experiment only. The Mining Federation did not give evidence before that Commision, but witnesses who were in favour of the Bill did. There was Mr. David Morgan, agent for the Aberdare and Merthyr Mining Association, who in reply to Questions 3,942 and following, approved of the proposal for an eight hours' day. When asked as to his opinion on the probable effect on trade, he said he would not be an advocate of an eight hours' legislative day in this country unless a similar proposal were adopted in foreign countries. And further on he expressed his belief that foreign countries would follow the example of this country.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the Question before the Committee now, whether the date should be 1899 or 1897.

MR. LEGH said, one more sentence would be to the point. The witness went on to say that, if foreign countries did not follow our example we should have to return to the existing system. He admitted that such a Bill might not be an entire success, and certainly in taking such an unusual step it was well to be cautious. The proposal accepted was a fair and reasonable one, but the shorter period would be more satisfactory in view of contingencies that might arise. Should the Bill prove a success there would be no difficulty in renewing it, but if, on the other hand, it was destined—as he believed it was—to become a disastrous failure, then it would be well to have a ready means of retiring from a false position without undue delay.

Question put, and negatived.

Amendment (*Mr. Stuart-Wortley*) agreed to.

*MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil) confessed he was very agreeably surprised at the spirit in which the promoters of the Bill had accepted Amendments so far, and was even encouraged to hope that they might accept the Amendment he was about to move. He frankly admitted it was of a far more important and far-reaching character than those which had been accepted, yet still he hoped that by the time he came to the end of his remarks hon. Gentlemen would be convinced of the justice of the claim he made on behalf of the majority of those who would be chiefly interested. He had very little doubt that had the House gone into Committee on the Bill at an earlier period of the Session, when the normal number of Members were in attendance, the Amendment he was about to move would have been carried, but as to its fate now he had considerable doubt. Within the House and its precincts there were probably not more than a third of the Members of the House of Commons, and he was in the unfortunate position that many supporters of his Amendment were absent, having paired with Members of the other side of the House, who also were supporters of the Amendment. He hoped that those Members who were present would approach the consideration of this question with an open mind. The Government had over and over again declared they took no side as a Government upon questions involved in the Bill; the Prime Minister had said so, the Leader of the House had said so, and the Home Secretary had said the same thing, so that the prestige of the Government would in no way be affected by any decision at which the Committee might arrive. Members who were pledged to support the Second Reading were not committed to any line of action towards Amendments proposed at this stage, and in fact several hon. Members who supported the Second Reading did reserve to themselves the right to support any modifications they might see fit to adopt in Committee, and several declared that they would not be prepared to support the Third Reading unless the Bill were considerably modified in Committee. That view was taken notably by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). He would refer later on to the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in his clear and able speech in support of the Bill a couple of years ago, but first he would refer to the speech of the late Prime Minister in support of the Second Reading of the Bill, which was word for word identical with this. He, for his own part, attached very great weight to that speech, and the attitude taken up by the right hon. Gentleman on that occasion, and believed it contributed materially to the decision the House arrived at on the Second Reading of the Bill, and he hoped the Committee would bear with him while he read extracts. In 1893 the right hon. Gentleman recorded his vote with certain reservations. He said—

> "I am bound to say I do feel that this is a question in which the protection of minorities, if they are thus to be called, is a subject having the utmost claims upon our attention. I frankly own that, after every fair allowance for uncertainty and disputed points, I am not ready to consent upon the Third Reading of this Bill to apply the compulsion it would impart to a community such as that which is represented by the miners of Northumberland and Durham. . . . For my own part, it appears to me, I confess, that a compulsory measure of this kind ought not to take effect except with the moral certainty on our part that the measure would express the sense of a majority so large in the various districts of the country that it might be said to be the general sense of the community."

Now, there was no proof whatever—far from a "moral certainty"—no proof whatever that the majority of the working classes affected favoured the Bill in its present form. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "It is quite clear that you cannot always have regard to minorities altogether insignificant in their numbers, but, at the same time, I must own I think it would not only be an unwarranted, but a dangerous course on the part of this House in compulsory legislation of this character, and in exceptional legislation of this character, to have no regard to anything except to the fact of a considerable majority of the mining class at large, and to be prepared to override the local sense of such important communities as those of the Northumberland and Durham miners. I almost think that many of the friends of the Bill, when they come to close quarters on the question, when we pass out altogether from the region of what might be called abstract discussion, and have to answer to ourselves what degree of compulsion and under what circumstances we were prepared to apply it, I almost think that some of them will shrink from the application of that compulsion in such a case as I have supposed."

That was the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman in 1893, and from a recent letter it was to be gathered that he had not changed his opinion. In that letter he said—

> "I am clear that if the miners desire the Eight Hours Bill with a degree of concurrence approaching unanimity, they have a moral title to it. Of the moral title to impose it on a considerable minority I am very doubtful, and I apprehend that if the minority is really considerable it will be found practically more difficult to overpower than some among the promoters of the Bill may imagine."

[*Cries of* "Read on!"] He had no objection to read the remainder—

> "The general adoption of the eight hours will give me, personally, very great satisfaction. I must not omit to say that, in speaking of Local

Option, I contemplate the action of districts rather than that of single collieries in near neighbourhood to one another."

His Amendment in contemplating local option proposed counties and not single collieries. He regarded this letter as showing that the right Gentleman still held the view that local option should be adopted as part of the Bill. He was doubtful of the moral title of the majority to impose a Bill such as this on a considerable minority, and it was only where the majority was so great as to amount to practical unanimity that he would support the Bill in its present form without local option. He (Mr. Thomas) did not think the hon. Member for Ince or any hon. Member present would dream of saying that there was anything like practical unanimity amongst the miners throughout the United Kingdom in support of the Bill in its present form. He should like to point out the very varying degrees of reduction which would take place in different parts of the country under the Bill in its present form. In some counties the Bill would cause hardly any reduction in the hours of labour, while in others it would involve a reduction of from 20 per cent. to 25 per cent., and thus the Committee would see that it would be very unequal in its treatment. He was not opposed to the principle of Parliamentary interference; his objection was entirely to the Bill in its present form. As the Committee knew, he himself had introduced a Bill on this very subject, so that his objection was entirely to the Bill in its present form. If an Amendment he had down for a later stage had been accepted by the promoters, it would, to his mind, have removed many of the most serious objections to the Bill, and he should not have been found here to-day moving this Amendment. The hon. Member for West Fife had stated that in his district the hours at the present time were eight from bank to bank. Then, again, from evidence given before the Royal Commission on Labour, it was clearly shown the hours of work in many districts were something like eight from bank to bank. Mr. Parker Rhodes, Secretary to the South Yorkshire Coalowners' Association, gave this evidence before the Royal Commission on Labour—

"7850.—Chairman: What are the average hours of the collier from bank to bank?—I got that out as carefully as I could, in order to make a Return to the Board of Trade, and also to your Commission; and the average hours from bank to bank are eight.

7851.—That is from bank to bank?—Yes, it is eight hours and eight minutes really."

Colonel J. B. Cochrane, Chairman of the South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire Coalmasters' Association, gave this evidence—

"10915. Mr. Dale: From your observation and experience, what would you put the average hours of the miner at from bank to bank?—I should say 7½.

10916. That of course must include the descending time, and the meal time?—But not the ascending.

10917. That is just as you choose to put it. It is better to put it including the ascending time?—Then I would make it from 7¼ to eight hours, I think."

On the other hand, Mr. William Jenkins, manager of the Ocean collieries—the most extensive in South Wales—gave this evidence—

12103. Mr. Dale: "Of course that is equivalent to saying you know that the time now from bank to bank is 9¾ hours?—Quite so."

So that in many districts the hours at the present time were only eight from bank to bank. In Fife, Midlothian, Worcestershire, South Staffordshire, and South Yorkshire the hours were already eight from bank to bank, so that the Bill would not make any practical difference in those districts in the hours of colliers and hewers, who formed the most important section of workmen underground. It might make a little difference in individual cases, but nothing of a serious character. It was most curious that the original demand for the Bill came from districts where the miners already had eight hours. They practically had the Eight Hours Bill themselves, and, not satisfied with that, they wanted to impose it on other districts. They did not wish to have it in South Wales. They there had nine hours winding coal, which practically meant 10 hours from bank to bank. On some days in the week in various collieries they worked 10½ hours. He would give three main reasons for the Amendment which he proposed—first, that any district had a right to determine such a question for itself, without the intervention of Parliament, provided that it did not interfere in any way with other districts. If he could show that South

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Wales—for he spoke more particularly in regard to South Wales—might be allowed to decide for itself what hours it would have, without affecting Yorkshire or other districts in England, he claimed that it should be allowed to do it. His second point was this: that there were different classes of coal produced in different districts, and that, while the Bill would not adversely affect the federated or home trade district from which it emanated, it would seriously affect the South Wales and Northumberland and Durham, which depended on foreign export business. The Committee would see that his second point had a very important bearing indeed on the question of local option. Men who wanted the Bill would not suffer in any way, but the men who did not want the Bill would be much prejudiced by it if it were passed in its present shape, as they would have to compete with foreign coal, the production of which could be increased in proportion to the falling-off in the output at home. His third and most important reason for asking the Committee to allow each district to decide the matter for themselves was this: there were differences in the geological and natural conditions under which coal was produced that made the present form of the Bill undesirable, and there would, therefore, be injustice and unreasonableness in applying the same cast-iron rule in every district. But, before discussing these points in detail, he should like to deal with an argument very constantly put forward, and which unless disposed of at the outset, might prevent due weight being given to the considerations he had to urge. It was this: it was said that, although the hours might be reduced, the output would not be diminished, because the men would work with increased enery, and in the shorter time would be able to produce quite as much as in the longer hours. They were told that the experience of the past bore that out. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, in the speech he had made in support of the Second Reading last year or the year before, put that argument forward very clearly and very forcibly. But he (Mr. Thomas) would like to remind the right hon. Gentleman that in the illustrations he had used, the hours had been reduced from the long hours of 12, 11, and 10 to 10 and 9, but that in this Bill it was proposed to reduce the hours from eight—for the longest period worked in South Wales, he thought, did not exceed eight—to six and a-half, or six, or even, in some districts, possibly to even less thant hat. He wanted to show this: that this argument of the experience of the past, where voluntary arrangements had been entered into, was far from being an argument in favour of a reduction of hours by Act of Parliament, and was really an argument in favour of no interference at all. In the past, reductions had been made by voluntary agreement in almost all cases. What did that mean? It meant that employers conversant in each particular case with the nature of the employment engaged in, considered that by a reduction of hours a certain result would follow—that was to say, that the men by increased energy would be able to maintain the output. They had done so in the coal trade all over the country. Certainly in South Wales they had made reductions in the hours of work which they had felt would be followed by no material reduction in the output. They had been right. Then could they not claim to be right when they said that no further reduction could be made? That was why he claimed that the argument was in their favour. The employers were right in the past when they said that no reduction of output would follow from the reduction of hours, and they thought they were right when they said now that further reduction of hours would be followed by a reduction of output. There was a limit to the argument. They could not go on for ever reducing the hours without curtailing the output. There must be some limit beyond which they could not go. If there was no limit, they would soon be in the enviable position of doing no work at all, and enjoying themselves at leisure immensely on a toy output produced by nobody. He believed the limit in coal-mining had been, he would not say quite reached, but very nearly reached, for the present, and, if they would allow him, he should like to give his own personal experience in the matter. No doubt the hon. Member for the Rhondda Valley would say he (Mr. D. A. Thomas) was not always against the eight hours.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda): Clewch, clewch!

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: The hon. Member said "Clewch, clewch." He (Mr. Thomas) confessed he was a convert, though perhaps not so recent as some people. He would tell the Committee the reason—which his hon. Friend, although he knew it, had never been candid enough to state in public. As a young man, he was ambitious to be a pioneer in this movement, and he put into force the eight hours bank to bank system.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM: With a double shift.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: Yes, with a double shift, and he was certain his hon. Friend would not get up and move the prohibition of the double shift in the Bill. He would challenge him to do it. He tried the system in a colliery with the management of which he had a good deal to do. The result was that, at the end of 13 months, with the desire that it should succeed, and everything being done on his part to make it succeed, the men declared that they would not go on working in that way, because they objected to the double-shift system. But how did it affect their output and wages? The output per collier per day, working the shorter hours, was 1·67 tons per day. When they returned to the longer hours it was 2·06 tons, or a difference of about 23 per cent. Now, he was curious to know what his hon. Friend would have to say in reply to that. On the expiration of the 13 months it was shown that the reduction in the output under the system was almost exactly proportionate to the reduction in the time. That showed that in South Wales, at any rate, they had reached a limit, below which no considerable reduction in the hours could be made without materially reducing the output. In a neighbouring pit a similar result had been arrived at, though the average was taken over a longer period and single shifts were worked. The hours in this case were 10½ from bank to bank on Fridays, and eight on Saturdays. From 1888 to 1892 the averages showed that the production on Fridays exceeded that of Saturdays by, roughly speaking, a quantity proportionate to the increased time worked. The output was from 25 to 25¼ per cent. larger on Friday than on Saturday. Those were facts from actual experience which were worth a ton of theory. They were in this difficulty in dealing with the question; he did not know what view the hon. Member for Eccles took, but some hon. Members declared that no reduction in the output would follow. The hon. Member for Normanton said that whereas the Members for Ince and Rhondda said it would, and no doubt they would not care a snap of the fingers for the Bill unless the output were reduced, for they belonged to a school of economists who thought that the less there was produced the more there would be to divide. He hoped that during the course of this discussion the hon. Members for Normanton and Rhondda would endeavour to settle their differences, and ascertain which was the correct view. He had on this point an extract from a speech made by the Member for Rhondda which he would like to read. The hon. Member said—

> "It was only by the reduction of hours or adhering to the nine hours a day system that the restriction of output could be satisfactorily carried out under the present system."

The nine hours a day system meant nine hours winding coal and not from bank to bank, which they did not adhere to at present according to his hon. Friend, and this in itself seemed to show that there could be no very strong demand for eight hours from bank to bank. The nine hours' working day meant 10 hours from bank to bank, which was the system in vogue at the present day.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM: It is not a 10 hours' day.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS said, that if it was nine hours winding coal it was practically 10 hours from bank to bank, for his hon. Friend must know that it took 40 or 50 minutes in a big colliery to let the men down, and a similar time to bring them up, and as they could not bring them up in exactly the order in which they went down, an hour must be deducted from the bank to bank time to get in the time left for coal winding.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM: The hon. Member gave just now this piece of information—that in South Wales they were winding coal 10 hours a day.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS said, he thought he had said 10 hours from bank to bank and nine hours winding coal. If he had not said that he had made a mistake. Some hon. Members around him, who were on the same side as the hon. Member for Rhondda upon this question, assured him that he had said that: The hon. Member for Rhondda had also said, in a speech delivered a few months back—

> "From a computation recently made it was found that between the overtime paid for and the overtime not paid for the men worked 11 hours per day instead of nine; and if they agreed to strike off that two hours they would restrict the output by about 20 per cent. Two hours knocked off from the 100,000 miners of South Wales would give additional employment to 20,000 more men. If that could be brought about it would create such a demand for labour as to considerably strengthen the market and do away with the danger of reducing prices."

The hon. Member had added—

> "And he appealed to them most earnestly to do all in their power to bring about the nine hours' day."

So that the miners in the Rhondda Valley, whom the hon. Member represented, and whom he said were so extremely anxious to have a seven hours' winding day, he had to appeal to to do all in their power to bring about a nine hours' winding day. That did not look as if they were very keenly in favour of this Bill. He (Mr. Thomas) said, the reduction in the output in South Wales would be from 20 to 25 per cent., but his hon. Friend argued it would be more than that. He made it 40 per cent.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM: No, no.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS said, he had read the hon. Member's speeches, and that was his view if he was correctly reported in *The South Wales Daily News*, which was a newspaper on very friendly terms with the hon. Member. He now wished to go a little more fully into his reasons against the compulsory form of the Bill. His hon. Friend would go with him as far as he could on this principle he was sure, because in the controversy which had been going on between the sliding-scale party, and the federationists in South Wales, his hon. Friend had always been a strong advocate for Home Rule for Wales on the wages question. That was what he (Mr. Thomas) was asking for Glamorganshire on this question, and he therefore hoped he should be able to carry his hon. Friend with him to some extent as to the first point he was endeavouring to make. But he thought the onus of showing that Wales could not be allowed to remain as it was and that the independent action of Wales would affect other districts, rested upon the promoters of the Bill. He contended that there was little or no competition between the South Wales district and the Midland districts, from which the demand for this Bill came. He assumed that South Wales, if left to itself, would not accept the Bill in its present form. The hon. Member for Rhondda would dispute this, and would no doubt speak for himself. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean disputed it; but if he was wrong, when South Wales came to take a ballot they could declare in favour of the Bill. At a recent ballot taken in the Merthyr boroughs, at 21 collieries no ballot was taken at the collieries in his hon. Friend's agency for obvious reasons—there was a majority in every case against the Bill in its present form. The total majority was four to one, the figures being 2,567 for the bank to bank and 8,838 against. One little point arose that he should like to draw attention to. After it was decided by the district generally that a ballot should be taken he received a letter from the secretary to the Dowlais Workmen's Committee in April last saying that the Dowlais workmen wished him to vote for the bank to bank Bill, that they had taken a ballot some few years previously, and by 1,600 to 300 odd had decided in favour of the bank to bank Bill, and saw no reason for taking a fresh ballot. He went to Dowlais himself and called a meeting of the colliers. About 1,000 men were present, and it was very clear which way the meeting was going, and an Amendment was proposed to the resolution against the bank to bank Bill in favour of taking a ballot by the very gentleman who had written to him. He suggested that both the motion and the amendment might very well both be passed, and they were passed, and the meeting decided against the eight hours' bank to bank Bill. On a ballot 1,973 voted against the eight hours' bank to bank, and 428 for. This showed the tremendous change which took place in the feeling of the workmen in two or three years. On the first occasion there was an overwhelming majority in favour of the Bill, and then there was an overwhelming majority, even greater, against it. This was evidence that the leaders of the miners might sometimes be mistaken as to the feeling of the men; and it showed also that that House ought to take great care not to pass hurried legislation in regard to this matter. He had now, he thought, convinced the Committee that he had some authority for speaking for South Wales. They had taken a ballot, and over and over again they had challenged their friends on the other side to take a ballot; but they would not do so, and the only conclusion he could come to was that they were afraid to do so. He came now to his next point—namely, the character of the South Wales trade. The South Wales, Northumberland, and Durham trade was a foreign trade, while the trade in the Federation districts was a home trade. He should like to call the attention of the Committee to this fact—the South Wales and the Lancashire and the Northumberland and the Durham miners comprised altogether very nearly half the miners in England and Wales. There were over 250,000 miners in those districts, and 330,000 in the rest of England, which they might call the Federation district. In 1892 he found, from Returns which were available to every Member of the Committee, that the foreign exports from England and Wales (he was not speaking of Scotland) were rather less than 25,500,000 tons; the export from South Wales and Monmouth and Tyne ports was over 22,500,000 tons—that was to say, the exports from non-Federation districts were 22,500,000 out of a total of 25,000,000. Consequently, from these districts there was exported nine-tenths of the whole of the coal sent abroad from England and Wales. He would now point out what proportion of coal produced in South Wales was exported, and what proportion in the Federation districts. In 1892, Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire exported for foreign and bunker use 18,000,000 to 20,000,000 out of its total production of 30,000,000, or between 60 and 70 per cent. In the Federation districts, out of a total output of 90,000,000, there was exported only 3,000,000, or less than 3 per cent. That showed the Committee how entirely different the trade of the districts was. He thought this had a very important bearing on the question of local option. It was clear that a very insignificant proportion of the coal produced in the Federation district was exported, and therefore it did not matter, as far as foreign competition was concerned, what happened in regard to the hours of labour; but in South Wales, where 60 or 70 per cent. of the output was exported, if the Bill passed in its present form it would have a very disastrous effect upon their trade, increasing the cost of production by 20, or, as some people believed 30 per cent. He was loth to say much about the question of foreign competition, because he knew it had often been put forward as a bogie in order to get reductions and put off advances in wages. There was no doubt, however, that foreign countries had made very great progress as compared with this country in recent years. A few years ago we were millions and tens of millions of tons in advance of the United States, but now they had very nearly caught us up. He should like to give an instance or two upon this question of foreign competition, and the House would understand that he was speaking from actual experience, because he was engaged every day of his life in selling coal, and knew something about foreign competition. In many places abroad the competition was becoming exceedingly severe, so that English coal was being rapidly driven out by foreign coal. He knew it had been pointed out that notwithstanding this the total aggregate exports of the country were increasing. That, no doubt, was so; but many causes had contributed to that, to which he would refer later. Figures showed that in 1892 the coal exported to competitive points was materially less than in 1883, notwithstanding that there was a vastly increased number of steamers, as against 10 years ago. In 1883 we exported to the Russian Southern ports, 312,333 tons; in 1892, 42,506 tons; to British East Indies, 323,620 tons in 1883, and 202,894 in 1892; to China and Hong Kong, 64,804 tons in 1883, and 19,110 tons in 1892; to British North America, 174,314 tons in 1883, and 71,674 in 1892; to the United States, 111,736 tons in 1883, and 22,576 in 1892; and to the Foreign West Indies, 272,453 tons in 1883, and 117,788 tons in 1892. The total result was, that whereas in 1883 we exported over 1,250,000 tons, in 1892 we exported less than 500,000 tons. He knew from his own personal experience that steamers went out to the East and returned without using any English coal at all. They coaled at Antwerp, where they got Belgian coal at 13s. 6d. a ton, and at the other side they got Japan coal at Singapore at 7s. per ton less than best Welsh. The coal trade had been materially benefited during the last 10 years by the enormous drop in freights and the consequent cheaper conveyance. There had been enormous reductions in freights. The freights to Singapore, Martinique, and Bombay, which were something like £1, say, in 1880, were to-day 10s., 7s. 6d., and 8s. respectively. The quotation to Antwerp was now 4s. 3d., and to Malta 4s. This great fall had immensely stimulated the South Wales coal trade, but it could not be expected to continue. It had reached its limit in fact, and steamers had ceased to be remunerative. Japanese coal was fast cutting us out in Singapore, where it could be obtained at something like 7s. per ton less than Welsh coal. Another point he wished to make was the difference between the working conditions in the Welsh mines and the Midland districts, imposed by nature, and which could not be altered by this Bill. He had worked out from Government Returns some figures showing how much more difficult it was to work coal in South Wales than in some of the districts from which the demand for this Bill came. The hours were longer in South Wales, and the output was less; and the hours were longer because the nature of the strata demanded it. He daresay hon. Members had often observed how frequent accidents were in South Wales from falls of the roofs and sides as compared with other districts. The reason for that was the brittle character of the strata as compared with that in English collieries. In England one might go a long distance through a colliery without seeing any pitwood, whereas in Wales the sides of the road were studded with props; and it took three or four times more pitwood in a South Wales mine than in an English mine, which enormously increased the cost of production. It was not only the pitwood itself that was expensive, but there was the cost of putting it up to be taken into account as well. In order to produce 1,000,000 tons of coal per annum, with eight hours bank to bank, it took 338 repairers in South Yorkshire, while in Glamorganshire it took 734. Again, four men in Glamorganshire could only produce the same amount of coal in a given time that three could produce in Nottinghamshire. Hon. Gentlemen would see what bearing this had upon the Amendment he was moving. If it took so many more men to produce the same quantity of coal in a given time it was unreasonable to lay down the same working hours for each district. By reason of the natural condition of things men in the more difficult districts must either work longer hours or receive less wages. He believed that in South Wales the men would prefer to work a little longer than in other districts, and have their wages maintained. He would make an appeal to the hon. Member for Haddingtonshire, who was a very strong opponent to the principle involved in this Bill some little time ago; he appealed to him to explain to the Committee the change in his opinion that had occurred. The hon. Gentleman told his constituents recently that he would do his utmost to put the Bill into a practical and working shape. He (Mr. Thomas) did not know what experience his hon. Friend had of the matter they were discussing, but he hoped he would tell them what changes he proposed to make in the Bill in order to make it workable. Did the hon. Gentleman think this Amendment a practical one? If not, why not?

MR. HALDANE said, his statement was that he should do his best to make the Bill workable.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (continuing) said, he was bound to say he should very much like to have the views of the Home Secretary. He (Mr. Asquith) had said he was convinced that this Bill was a practical one. Holding the position he did, he thought they were entitled to have his opinion, and that he should show them how this Bill could come into operation without prejudice to the district he represented. He did not know whether he might make any appeal to the Irish Members, but he hoped that they would carefully consider this Amendment and come to a decision entirely upon its merits. Hon. Members on his side of the House were divided, and he would remind them that three of the direct Labour Representatives were in favour of the Amendment, while three were opposed to it. The Liberal Party was divided upon this question, and he begged hon. Members from Ireland in their own interest not as a body to take sides or to do anything which might damp enthusiasm for their cause. Finally, he asked each individual of the Committee to recognise the vast responsibility that rested upon the shoulders of those who recorded their vote upon this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the last Amendment, to insert the words—

> "In any county in which a majority of the workmen employed underground in the mines therein shall so resolve, in manner hereinafter provided, and so long as such resolution shall remain unrescinded."—(*Mr. D. Thomas.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. ROBY said, he regretted that he should be in any way opposed to his friends from Northumberland, Durham, and Wales, but he could not help thinking that they looked with a too conservative eye at their own arrangements, without considering how much could be done without incurring the changes and risks that they feared. All these difficulties were dealt with upon the occasion of the Second Reading of the Bill, and he thought that those who voted for the Second Reading would be of opinion that the decision arrived at really involved the rejection of this Amendment also. He could understand the desire of the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment to show that there was no competition between Durham and South Wales and the rest of the country; but, unfortunately, he was not right in that matter, because, during the coal strike, the colliery owners availed themselves of any opportunity they had of entering into competition with other districts. This Bill had from the first been one of a very limited and definite character. It did not permit any exception whatever, and he believed that no substantial exception could be admitted to the Bill. If they had eight hours enacted by the Legislature in one part of the country, they so far tied the hands of the masters and workmen in that part as against the other parts of the country. They could not, in a country which had so many facilities for carrying coal from one district to another, to be used in the manufactories, proceed upon the same lines as though a primitive state of affairs existed, and coal was consumed only in the districts in which it was produced. If the coal of South Wales was consumed only in South Wales there might be more to be said for the case of the opponents of the Bill. His hon. Friend spoke of Wales as though the miners there were all of his way of thinking, and as though their number was very large. The number of underground miners in South Wales was 70,000.

Mr. ABRAHAM: 110,000.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: The only place where the matter has been tested there were four to one against the Bill.

Mr. ROBY said, he did not think that would be a reasonable conclusion to draw. Such figures were really for a purpose of this kind worth very little. What should be done was to take the large organisations and see how they had continued to act year after year in this important matter. The Aberdare and Merthyr districts were spoken of by Mr. David Morgan before the Labour Commission; but he could only speak for the men in the Union. The number of men in the Union was 7,000, while there were 15,000 men in the Valleys, so that more than half were not represented by the Union, in which only a majority was in favour of the old system. As to Northumberland and Durham, he frankly admitted that from the first he had seen that the case of those two counties was a strong one. If, however, this Bill were carried it would not force upon the hewers in Durham and Northumberland more hours of labour than they had at present, as they were now working seven or six and a half hours. The persons whose work it would reduce were boys, who were now working 10 hours, and in whose interest the eight hours might well be enforced. He regretted that this and other Amendments in the same direction had been placed on the Paper. He believed he was only expressing the opinion of the supporters of the Bill when he said that they regarded one and all of those Amendments as fatal to the Bill, and were not prepared to go on with the Bill if they were carried. If this Amendment were adopted, on Northumberland and Durham and the Aberdare Districts would rest the responsibility of rejecting a measure which was desired by all the other districts, and which would, he believed, be of great assistance to the country generally. The proposal must be fatal to the Bill, because it would prevent the system working with harmony all over the country, and would thus prevent the removal of one great cause of strife.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. Thomas) had admitted that he had laid himself open to the accusation of having changed his opinions. No one knew better than his hon. Friend how many times he had changed his opinions on this question, and any one who would look through the list of Amendments to this Bill would see that his hon. Friend had, with great ability, proposed a considerable number of contradictory Amendments. His hon. Friend had trimmed his sails so as to catch every wind that blew. Anything that was accepted he would accept, and if anything was refused he would also have a finger in the pie. His hon. Friend had contended that the difficulty in regard to the production of coal in South Wales was the physical difficulty of strata. The facts connected with his hon. Friend's own collieries, however, proved otherwise. The men in Wales, it was said, were able to produce 25 per cent. more coal than the men in Nottingham, but lately the system called "the Nottingham system" had been introduced into South Wales, and where it had been tried it had been found that the men were able to produce about 25 per cent. more under the new system than under the old, so that means had already been provided by his hon. Friend and other coal owners of making it easier to carry out the change proposed by this Bill. He did not think it mattered much to that House what were the personal opinions of his hon. Friend and himself with regard to this question. They wanted to know the opinions of the working men themselves. It was well known that in South Wales and Monmouthshire there were 110,000 people working in and about mines. Since 1887 these men had been represented in the Trade Union Congresses in this country, and had always voted in favour of the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, and they had sent representatives to the International Congress, and the miners of South Wales each time until the last occasion had given their votes solid in favour of miners' eight hours from bank to bank. His hon. Friend (Mr. D. Thomas) himself, when a candidate for Merthyr, and for some time after that, was known to be a strong advocate of the eight hours from bank to bank. He had changed his opinions, and had given his reasons why.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: My hon. Friend is quite wrong.

MR. W. ABRAHAM: I again say my hon. Friend during the time he was a candidate for the borough of Merthyr, and for some time afterwards, was a strong advocate of the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill from bank to bank.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: If I may be allowed to correct the hon. Member, in 1891 I voted against the eight hours bank to bank. In this House, in 1888, I think there was no talk of any Eight Hours Bank to Bank Bill.

MR. W. ABRAHAM said, that explained his position, because his hon. Friend had no vote when he was a candidate. In moving the Amendment, the greatest argument adduced by his hon. Friend was that a portion of the miners of South Wales were against the Bill. But that was beside the question entirely. That was not the Amendment before the House. His hon. Friend had not been able to quote a single voice among the leaders of the workmen in South Wales, who were in favour of this Amendment. The ballot that was taken among them was on the question whether they were in favour of eight hours from bank to bank, or eight hours working. His hon. Friend had 20,000 miners in his constituency, but he was only able to account for 10,000 of them in the ballot. With all respect to people who had changed their minds, they had not changed theirs, and they did not see the necessity of taking a ballot. The men themselves did not see the necessity of taking a ballot, and if they were to take a ballot at the request of his hon. Friend, they would want to know from him whether he had finally made up his mind upon this question. They had not heard of any leader of the men in South Wales who had changed his opinion, and there was nobody in South Wales who had the same opinion as his hon. Friend.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, the Bill would have unequal effects in different districts. In some cases the coal workings were at the shaft, in others they were at a great distance from the shaft, and there the effect of the Bill would be most disastrous upon the hours of work. There was a large colliery in his constituency where the time spent in going down to the face of the coal was an hour and the return to the bank was 75 minutes, making altogether 135 minutes, and there was an incidental waste of a quarter of an hour in the lowering and in the ascent. The total result was the loss of one hour and 50 minutes, and the hours of work would be only six hours and 10 minutes. In another colliery the time spent in going backwarks and forwards was an hour, and that only left seven hours actual work. The nature of the working and the character of the coal must also be considered. In some cases it was worked much more easily than in other cases, and to have a severe limit of hours would give them a great advantage compared in collieries where the working was more difficult. In some cases the charge would be so great that collieries would be entirely closed and men would be deprived of their occupation. He contended that danger must arise if the limit of hours was eight. There was danger from the haste in which some men worked. It was not easy to restrain the eagerness of the young collier who desired to get down the coal in as little time as he could. In addition to that natural eagerness, there was the further difficulty of his being pressed by legislation; and he was quite sure that danger would be greatly increased, and the number of accidents would be considerably multiplied. There was another injustice which they desired to avert by carrying this Amendment, that was the injustice to slow workers. Some men constitutionally worked more slowly than others; and probably a careful workman who desired to protect himself and avert danger from his neighbour worked more slowly than a more impetuous man. Therefore, on the ground of danger, he contended that the privileges and exemptions claimed by this Amendment ought to be conceded. The necessity for the Bill could not be put upon the plea of health, for they knew, from statistics, that the occupation of the miner was a healthy one. He was surprised to hear his hon. Friend the Member for Eccles speaking against the principle of local option in this respect. The Bill meant coercion; it meant compelling workmen who desired to be free to submit to what they regarded as bondage; and, in supporting the Amendment, he did so on behalf of a large number of workmen in Wigan whose sentiments were well known to him.

*MR. TOMLINSON said, he believed the Bill contained in itself the seeds of so much real disaster to the general interests of the country that he only looked upon an Amendment of this kind as in some degree mitigating that disaster. He believed that the feeling in favour of the Bill which had, no doubt, been expressed by large bodies of workmen at different times was being diminished the more the workmen became acquainted with the possible or probable results of carrying it out. Though he did not look with any great amount of satisfaction on any of these so-called local option Amendments, the carrying of them would have this advantage. Upon workmen of each colliery, or each district or county, or whatever unit was taken, would rest the responsibility of carrying into operation the provisions of the Bill. Another thing that would happen, if in any way local option was carried out, was this: that the men would have to consider the question not as it affected the day's work, but as it would affect the week's work, the month's work, and even the year's work. At the present moment in Lancashire no individual collier worked more than five days a week, and he believed the average all over the Kingdom was rather less than five days a week, the last Returns putting it at from 4½ to 4¾ days. In no large district in the country did the miners work six days a week, but if this Bill passed and the men wished to make the same wages they made now they would have to work six days a week, and therefore the men ought to be left to decide for themselves the course they would adopt. Local option undoubtedly brought them face to face with these alternatives, and it should be left in the hands of the men to decide whether they would accept lower wages or work for a greater number of days. The reason this Bill was regarded with less favour in the districts of South Wales and the East Coast, was that those districts were the chief exporting districts, and the men came to the conclusion that the result of the Bill would be to raise the price of coal in those districts, and tend to interfere with the export trade. The same thing would apply to the Midland coalfields, including Lancashire and Yorkshire, although the operation would not be so direct. Even at the present moment it was extremely difficult for those interested in and dependent upon the coal industry to maintain themselves against foreign competition, and it was a matter of common notoriety that the Belgium ironworks were driving out the trade of the English ironworks in many parts of the country. He knew of one large building now in course of erection intended for manufacturing purposes, and in the heart of the manufacturing districts, in which the whole of the ironwork came from Belgium, and there was no doubt that the competition of Belgian iron was even now depriving British works of the business formerly carried on. He knew there were many hon. Members who said that the price of coal would not be materially increased by the adoption of this Bill, but he believed that those who said so had not fully studied the effect of the Bill. It so happened that he had in his hands the result of an experiment which had been carried on at a certain colliery with a view to ascertain what the effect of the shorter hours would be: $8\frac{1}{2}$ hours' winding coal was equivalent to 10 hours from bank to bank, and the output in that case from 155 men was 313 tons; when the working time got down to $8\frac{1}{4}$ hours from bank to bank, with 169 men, the output sank to 247 tons; and an eight-hour day, from bank to bank, with 152 miners, gave an output of 208 tons. He need not go through all the details; but the increased cost per ton worked out, for $8\frac{1}{4}$ hours' day, at 6d.—7, and with a reduction to 8 hours the increase of cost was 11d.—8. If the workmen were to earn as much upon the new basis as upon the old, they would have to be paid as much as would make the additional cost of getting the coal 2s. 5d.—3. If the result of the Bill was to increase the price of coal to that extent it would make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a considerable number of industries which required coal to be carried on, and the inevitable consequence would be to drive trade into foreign countries, and to throw large bodies of men out of work in this country altogether. His view in supporting the Amendment was that before the Bill became operative in any district the colliers who were to be the subjects of it should have the opportunity of putting themselves face to face with what the real effects of the measure would be likely to be—namely, the alternative of lower wages or a greater number of hours.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said, it was now something like a quarter of a century since he had the control of perhaps the largest coalfield in South Wales, so that credit would be given to him of having some experience of this subject. He might also mention that while a great many of the enthusiastic advocates of to-day of eight hours for miners were in the nursery, he was advocating such a limitation of hours, so that the subject was not in any sense a new one to him. On the contrary, it was a subject to which he had devoted a considerable amount of thought and attention; and it was one which was very near and dear to his breast. But he took the liberty of saying that this was not an eight hours Bill at all. It was a very short Bill, but it was a very mischievous Bill. It had been conceived by those who knew little or nothing about colliers or colliers' interests; and he ventured to say that if the hon. Member who drew this Bill had his time over again he was certain he would never dream of drawing a Bill such as that which had been presented to the House this Session. There were several points in the Bill which, to the experienced mind, went to prove that it was not an Eight Hours Bill at all. When he advocated eight hours for underground men, he took the line that the eight hours should mean from the working; but it was well known that a certain amount of time was occupied in a man getting to his work in the mine, and this ought not to be included in the time devoted to the working of the coal. To include that time in the hours of working would be just the same as if in a warehouse, where young men had to go from 9 o'clock in the morning till 6 o'clock in the evening.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that he is not speaking to the Amendment.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON said, he would endeavour, as far as possible, to keep within the limits of the Amendment, but he thought that what he was saying was coming to the point. He maintained that if the Amendment was not carried the effect of the Bill would be to increase the cost of the production of coal, to decrease the wages of the men, and to increase the number of accidents in the mines. The views that were stated by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil represented the views of the majority of the miners in South Wales. He was rather amazed at the little quibble which was made with regard to the meeting which had been called by the hon. Gentleman, and at which, out of 2,300 men present, 1,900 were on his side, and 400 against. He maintained that any gentleman who represented a constituency in South Wales who was able to get together a meeting of 2,300 miners had secured a very representative gathering, and one which he was quite justified in being proud of. If the hon. Gentleman would come into his district, into Blaenau, or into Nantyglo, or into the Ebbw Vale district, he would find hundreds of thousands of miners ready to rally around him and to vote in identically the same manner as those 1,900 men did. This proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the hon. Member for Eccles knew nothing of the requirements of South Wales. He might know something about Yorkshire and Lancashire, but he maintained that he knew nothing of what was required for South Wales. If the Committee would permit him, he would point out that the eight hours which were in this Bill were not even reduced to seven hours, but were reduced to six and a-half hours in many instances, and he was sure hon. Gentlemen never could have contemplated passing a Bill which not only gave the colliers the right to work eight hours, but also gave them the privilege of reducing those eight hours to six and a-half hours. There was another matter to which he would like to call the attention of the Committee. A collier, in order to earn his livelihood, was paid for the amount of coal he cut. It was manifestly clear that, if a collier was paid by the amount of coal he cut, with all these drawbacks in getting to his work, he could not possibly cut a sufficient amount of coal to earn a livelihood. In cutting the coal a man was obliged to leave what was known as a vast amount of rubbish in the pit, and if he had to vacate the pit while that rubbish was being removed he would lose a great deal of time in which he might be earning money.

MR. LITTLE (Whitehaven) rose to a point of Order. He submitted that the hon. Member was not speaking to the Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to speak to the Amendment.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON said, the Amendment embodied so much that it was difficult in speaking upon it not to refer to many points bearing upon the subject. The hon. Member for Eccles had stated that the Amendment embodied so much that if it were carried they would have to abandon the Bill, and as it embodied the whole Bill——

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the Amendment embodies the whole Bill. The question raised by the Amendment is whether the majority of workmen in the country should have the power of adopting the Bill or not.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON said, he was explaining these different matters in order to show that if the men had local option they would have the course most beneficial to themselves, and it was impossible to explain that point without showing the great number of objections there would be from the view of the colliers to the passing of this Bill in its present form, and how much preferable it would be that they should have local option. There was also the matter of repairing in the pits. Everybody knew perfectly well that if a collier was deprived of that privilege, which he had hitherto enjoyed, and special men should have to go into the pit to do this work, the collier would consequently lose a large amount of his pay. Then they came to the matter of local option, and he ventured to say that if this Amendment was agreed to by the Committee, at least 95 per cent. of the men in South

Wales would agree to the Bill on those terms immediately. An hon. Member said "No." He did not know whether that hon. Member had the same knowledge of South Wales that he had, but from the experience he had had in South Wales he had no hesitation in saying that there was no point on which the men were so rigid as that of local option. Only quite recently, in 1892, they had a strike in South Wales. The men went out, not of their own choice, but by order of their delegates. The men had no more idea why they went out than the man in the moon, but as soon as they were approached and asked on what terms they would go back to work they at once said they would go back if they could have local option. The hon. Member who had brought in the Bill had thrown a sort of political grenade into the midst of his Party, and he did not appear to be a very welcome guest among them. If the hon. Member would take his (Mr. Isaacson's) advice he would agree to the Amendment, which would thereby greatly strengthen his Bill.

*Sir C. M. PALMER (Durham, Jarrow) said, his constituents, who were entirely working men, many of them being miners, naturally felt that this Bill was one of the most serious importance to their district. In Northumberland and Durham it was believed that if the Bill passed in its present shape it would paralyse mining and other industries. He was possibly one of the largest coal-owners in the North of England, and when this Bill was introduced he felt it was only due to the miners to investigate the whole subject and inquire how the proposal would affect them. He did so with a natural desire to reduce the hours of labour as much as it was in his power to do so. He found on consulting the agents of his mines, which produced upwards of 2,000,000 tons of coal a year, that if the Bill were passed as it now stood the output would be reduced at least 10 to 20 per cent. This reduction in the output would mean that a large number of miners would be thrown out of employment, while the cost of coal would be increased by from 1s. to 2s. per ton. This would render it impossible for many of our national industries to be carried on and would paralyse our export trade. The export trade employed shipping, and thus gave employment to the shipbuilding yards and to other industries connected with them. Bad as the shipping industry was now, it would be rendered much worse if the Bill became law. He held in his hand an extract from a newspaper article in which it was stated that our export of coal to Hamburg had fallen from 820,000 tons in the first six months of last year to 760,000 tons during the corresponding period this year, while the import of coal to Hamburg from Westphalia in the same period had risen from 420,000 to 540,000. The fact was that we were losing our markets, not only in the North Sea, but also in the Baltic and other places. The Bill, if passed, would have a most disastrous effect upon the trade of Northumberland and Durham, and he hoped that if the Representatives of other parts of the Kingdom were desirous of having the hours of labour curtailed they would, at all events, give the miners of Northumberland and Durham the right of saying whether the Bill should apply to them or not.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, his hon. Friend the Member for Eccles (Mr. Roby) had said very truly at the opening of his speech that this Amendment raised the whole question of local option. The proposal was to his (Mr. Fenwick's) mind so natural and so reasonable, having regard to all the difficulties of mining operations, that he should have thought that the least that could have been expected from his hon. Friend was that he should have listened with a free and open mind to the arguments and facts brought forward in support of the Amendment. His. hon. Friend, however, had told the Committee in effect that, however strong the facts, however cogent and conclusive the arguments brought forward, the promoters of the Bill had made up their minds, and would withdraw the Bill if the Amendment were carried. His hon. Friend had said that, if this happened, on the supporters of local option would rest the responsibility of having withheld the privileges conferred by the Bill from those who would have enjoyed them had the measure become law. He (Mr. Fenwick) should have thought that not on those who supported the Amendment but on those who withdrew the Bill in the event of the Amendment being carried would rest the responsibility referred to. He was glad that the Debate had been so far conducted in the best of good temper, though he was bound to say he deeply regretted that his hon. Friend the Member for Eccles and those who were acting with him should have come to the conclusion which had been announced before hearing the case the supporters of the Amendment had to present to the Committee. His hon. Friend the Member for Eccles seemed to treat somewhat lightly the argument advanced by his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. D. Thomas) in reference to the question of foreign competition. Of course it was a common thing to meet that argument by saying it was the old, old bogey that had been trotted out again and again. He (Mr. Fenwick) was not very much given to being startled by bogies, but having considered this question very carefully and fully, and the effect it was likely to produce in the district he had the honour to represent, he had come to the conclusion that there was more real substance in this bogey than would be found in many other bogies that were brought forward. He wished to deal with the question almost exclusively in its relation to the County of Northumberland. Roughly speaking, the output of coal in the United Kingdom was 180,000,000 tons per annum. The output in the County of Northumberland was about 10,000,000 tons per annum, or about one-eighteenth of the entire output of the Kingdom. He believed he was correct in saying that at least 80 per cent. of the coal produced in Northumberland was exported, having to compete in the open market with coal that was produced in France, Belgium, Germany, and other parts of Europe. The total export from the United Kingdom in 1892, when the coal trade was in a fairly normal condition, was rather under 30,500,000 tons, but it was fair to say that this included cinders and patent fuel. He had taken the figures from the *Statistical Abstract.* They showed that practically Northumberland sent out ore than 33 per cent. of the entire ort of coal from the United Kingdom. er these circumstances, when there only 2,000,000 tons of the total left for local consumption and for ic purposes, it was absurd to say rthumberland competed with the districts which were generally demanding that this Bill should become law. He had heard it said that during the recent dispute in the coal trade a certain percentage of coal came from Northumberland and Durham and the Midlands, and that was an evidence of competition. It was absurd to tell the Committee that because, during the prevalence of an abnormal state of things such as existed during that dispute, coal was brought from Northumberland and Durham into the Midland districts that was an evidence that those districts had ordinarily to face the competition of Northumberland and Durham. Indeed, to advance such arguments savoured of an attempt to impose on the Committee, though he must do his hon. Friend the justice of saying that he did not think he had any such intention.

Mr. ROBY: I merely instanced the case as showing what might occur—that Northumberland and Durham could, if they chose, compete with other parts of the United Kingdom.

Mr. FENWICK agreed that it might occur in an entirely abnormal state of affairs such as was brought about by the great coal strike, but denied that it occurred under normal conditions. Over and over again he had called the attention of the leaders of the men in the Federation districts to their own statements to the effect that the northern counties did not compete with them; and when he again quoted those statements at the Birmingham Conference in July last year not a single one of his friends ventured to get up and contradict him. What were those statements? Again and again during the coal dispute, when the owners advanced the argument that it was owing to the competition of Durham and Northumberland that they were driven to seek for a reduction of wages, the reply was made by his friends, the leaders of the men in the Federated districts, that Durham and Northumberland in no way competed with the coalowners of those Federated districts. Returning to the question of foreign competition, he would, in order to show how real and tangible was the danger, call the attention of the Committee to certain facts which any hon. Member could verify in the Library. There they would find, from evidence given before a Royal Commission, that in 1883 the output in the United Kingdom was 45 per cent. greater than that of France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Japan, Russia, and the United States all combined. What were the facts 10 years later? In 1892-3, although in the interim the output in the United Kingdom had increased by more than 20,000,000 tons, we were 69 per cent. below the combined output of the countries to which he had referred. That was to him a very serious and a very important question, representing as he did a district 80 per cent. or more of the produce of which was sent abroad, and had to compete with the produce of the countries of which he had spoken. He really thought the Amendment which had been moved by his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil afforded them on the question a reasonable *modus vivendi*—a fair compromise on a plain question. He knew, of course, that those who took the position he held were very frequently misrepresented both by other public men and by writers in the public Press. It was only a few days before that he took up a London journal, in which he was not a little surprised to find himself described as a vehement and unqualified opponent of the eight hours day; while another London paper a few days ago described him as a violent and uncompromising opponent of the movement. He did not know what other people thought of him, but he had never been disposed to regard himself as violently opposed to an eight hours day or to a legislative eight hours day, for he had never been one of those who declared that Parliament had no right or authority to interfere with the hours of adult labour. He had treated the question they were considering as one of practical politics, and from the point of view of the practical effect it would be likely to have upon the district which he had the honour to represent, and the interests of which he was charged to protect and defend. He did not feel called upon to define for the thousand and first time his position in relation to the matter, but it was practically the same as that which he told his constituents that he held in 1887, when the question first came before them. On that occasion, after pointing out to the miners present at a large meeting in his own county the difficulties that would have to be encountered in the event of an eight hours day being forced upon them, he defined his own position by saying, as he said now, that if they were prepared to accept the responsibilities and to face all the consequences that might follow such an important change as the Bill involved to their own district, he for one would not be found to stand in the way of its passing; but practically his position in reference to the question had always been one in favour of local option, and he was glad to find that in that opinion he was strongly supported by evidence which was given before the recent Royal Commission on Labour. One or two instances he would like to bring briefly before the House, and his extracts should be taken from the evidence of gentlemen who could not be said to be in any way prejudiced against the adoption of a legal eight hours day. He would first take the testimony of one who had taken a very active part in the labour movement, and who was a very firm and fervent advocate of the legal eight hours day—Mr. Tom Mann. A question was put to him by the hon. Member for Morpeth to the following effect:—"You also spoke," said the hon. Member,

> "of trade and local option, and I understand from that that, even in connection with the same trade, where through certain local circumstances there may be a desire to be exempt from any system, whatever it might be, you would allow there an exemption as to the eight hours?"

Mr. Mann's reply was—

> "I have not even proposed that they should be put to the trouble of asking for exemption. I have proposed a plan whereby those who desire it must ask for it."

Then this question was put by the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Leeds—

> "The plan which you suggest of local option and trade option combined would obviously give greater elasticity than a uniform eight hours Act?"

and the reply was—

> "Yes."

Then in answer to another question Mr. Mann added—

> "I have said do not cover the whole trade—in order to give this requisite elasticity I should be content with covering the district."

And that was practically all that was asked for in the Amendment—that there should be given to the district the right of option either to come within the provisions of the Bill or to refuse to do so if the colliers of that district thought their interests would be in any way jeopardised by the enforcement of those provisions in that particular district. He would like to take another example or two from the evidence given by his hon. Friend the Member for West Ham. The hon. Member for Leeds put this question—

> "If it could be proved that the mining industry in any particular district would be seriously prejudiced by the establishment of an eight hours day—so seriously prejudiced that many of the collieries in that district would have to be closed—would you, nevertheless, insist upon and press for a legal eight hours day?"

The reply was in the negative. "If," went on the hon. Member for Leeds—

> "it could be shown that the economical result of it would be disastrous in certain districts, you would abandon your advocacy of an Eight hours Bill?"

The reply was—

> "I should meet the case in the way in which similar difficulties are met under the Coal Mines Regulation Act. There are certain clauses of that Act from which exemption can be obtained on application to the Home Secretary, and if it could be shown, and the miners in any given district declared by a majority of their members, that the operation of the Act would injure them and their trade, I would give them power to obtain exemption from the Eight Hours Act so long as it was that way."

And that was all which they who suggested the Amendment asked for. So long as they were convinced, and the miners of the North of England were convinced, that it would be injurious to them and detrimental to their interests to have the provisions of such an Act as that forced upon them, they desired that they should have the power to free themselves from its injurious consequences. The Member for Leeds went on—

> "But I am speaking now, not of a trade, but of a district."

—for he was careful, evidently, to distinguish between trade option and local option. My hon. Friend said—

> "Yes, I know, but in the case of the miners —not that I believe that any disastrous results such as are anticipated would follow, but in order to obtain our Eight Hours Bill for the benefit of these districts which at present work unduly long hours—I would be prepared seriously to consider a proposal of that kind."

Still more important is the reply given by my hon. Friend to a question addressed o him by my hon. Friend and colleague the Member for Morpeth, who asked—

> "Suppose you have a body of men who are fairly well organised, and who, after considering the subject very fully, have come to the conclusion that an Eight Hours Bill would be very injurious to them, would you enforce an Act of the kind upon them regardless of their wishes and opinions?"

The reply was—"I would not." Thus he had found in the testimony of the two witnesses he had cited strong support of the opinion which he personally held, and which he had stated to the Committee. It was their belief, their sincere belief, in the North of England, that the provisions of the Bill, if they were universally and uniformally applied, would injure their trade and their interests; and here again he might call to his aid the testimony of his hon. Friend the Member for West Ham, who, in a recent article in *The Scottish Leader*, pointed out in unmistakeable terms that the establishment of an universal miners' eight hours would mean

> "the breaking up and upheaval, so far as the Counties of Durham and Northumberland are concerned, of old and long-established customs."

That, he thought, was a fair statement of what would be the effect of the Bill if its provisions were forced upon the whole mining industry. He thought the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr Tydvil met all reasonable and legitimate requirements, and afforded to districts which honestly and sincerely believed that their interests would suffer by the enforcement of the provisions of the Act, an opportunity of freeing themselves from its injurious consequences. He did hope the Committee would seriously pause before rejecting such a reasonable proposal as had been placed before it, and he again expressed his deep regret that the promoters of the Bill should, before they had had an opportunity of listening to arguments for the Amendment, have closed their minds and have come to a determined conclusion that, whatever the case for local option might be, they would rather reject the Bill than accept it with such a principle.

*Mr. WRIGHTSON (Stockton-on-Tees) said, he had listened with very great interest to the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Wansbeck, because it was in that division that his own interests lay. The effect of an Amendment which was proposed and agreed to at an earlier part of the evening rather, as he considered, altered the scope of the Bill, and made it an experimental one. The Bill was now to terminate at the end of December, 1899, and as this was the case, he would ask the Committee to deal with the experiment in the ordinary way in which prudent men usually dealt with experiments, and that was, to limit the area of the experiment in such a way that the danger might not be incurred of wrecking a great deal of the trade of this country. With regard to the present Amendment, he supported it from the point of view of a Northumberland coalowner, because he was convinced that the Bill if passed would largely reduce the trade of the county. About 80 to 90 per cent. of the coal raised in Northumberland was exported. Therefore, if the cost of raising their coal were increased, as it certainly would by this Bill, they would be handicapped in a most serious way in their exports of coal. It was quite a different thing in the midland counties. The midland counties might be quite justified in making this experiment, but an experiment of this kind in Northumberland might be disastrous. The right course would be to try the experiment within the area which sent representatives in favour of the Bill. They in Northumberland would be most willing to look on and see how it worked, and if by December 1899 it had been a success in the districts in which it was tried, they might then be disposed to consider whether the area should be extended, and the Bill made permanent. There were many reasons why Northumberland should be so exempted. The county differed from other districts in that it had no manufactories amongst the collieries. It was true that there were manufactories on the Tyne, but they could be served equally well from the County of Durham. The fact that 80 to 90 per cent. of their saleable coal was exported made it peculiarly necessary that the effect of any change which would lead to increased foreign competition should be taken into account. He had mentioned that he now looked upon the Act as an experimental one, and he might be in Order in drawing attention to the failure of another experiment on very similar lines which had just been announced. On the 9th of this month a deputation from the East End of London was introduced to Lord Spencer for the purpose of urging that contracts for the construction of ships of the Royal Navy should be given to the shipbuilding yards of the Thames.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The Question here is whether a majority of miners shall decide whether the Act shall be enforced in their district.

*MR. WRIGHTSON said, that of course he bowed to the Chairman's ruling, but he had thought he was in Order, as he was merely pointing out that by a previous Amendment the Bill had become an experimental measure, and that another like experiment had so utterly failed that it did not encourage them to make further experiments in that direction. He trusted he had said enough to draw attention to the fact that an experiment which was proposed by certain so-called Labour Members representing Metropolitan Divisions had utterly failed, and that now they were asking that the Admiralty should give orders on the Thames, because it was found that owing to that experiment having failed such orders could not be obtained by legitimate competition. He would point out, with regard to the effect of the Bill in Northumberland and Durham, that the increase of the cost of coal which would assuredly take place after the passing of the measure would affect other industries of the district. Durham and Cleveland were the largest centres of the iron and steel industries in the world; coal was largely employed in those industries, and he hoped the Committee would not forget that any increase in the cost of coal must necessarily largely increase the cost of the steel and iron produced in the district. There was an enormous amount of competition on the Continent for orders, and he could assure the Committee that merchants of the City of London were giving their orders to a very serious extent to the Continent, and they were orders which had to be paid for largely by English money. We must on no account carry any legislation which would so raise our cost that we should put ourselves out of position to compete with foreigners. It was well known that with the hostile tariffs which were placed against the admission of English goods into Belgium and Germany that the Belgians and Germans were able to undersell us in our markets, because they sacrificed part of the large profits which they made in the articles supplied for their own home consumption, and lowered the cost when they had to export their productions in competition with us. What with the advantage which protective tariffs gave to these countries, what with the fact that our day of 8, 8½, or 9 hours had to compare with their day of 11½ hours or 13 from the time the men entered the factory to the time they left it, what with the fact that they had lower wages also; if they added another difficulty by increasing the cost in this country they would sacrifice the position they had held of being the greatest manufacturers of the world. Up to this time there had been a great reluctance on the part of civil engineers in this country to sub-letting work to Belgium and Germany, on the ground that the quality of their workmanship was not equal to ours; but he had ascertained from civil engineers of prominence in this country, who had been obliged to place their orders in those countries, that the quality now produced by the Germans and the Belgians was quite equal to what we had been producing. Therefore, he submitted that at a time like this, when competition had become so keen, it was absolutely necessary that the House should refuse to countenance any legislation which would add one iota to the cost of our production.

Mr. S. WOODS (Lancashire, Ince) said, the hon. Member for Wansbeck (Mr. Fenwick) charged them with not approaching this question of local option with an open mind. They did not approach it with an open mind simply because it struck at the vital part of the Bill, that it would vitiate the whole principle upon which the measure was founded, and that if this local option clause were to pass nine-tenths of the miners of this country would be in a thousand times worse position than they were at present. The hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division complained that the supporters of the Bill had not waited until the facts were before the House. But they had been familiar with the facts for the last three years, and the very same arguments that were used by the hon. Member were used on the Second Reading of the Bill and had been urged again and again. The contention of the supporters of the Amendment was that some particular coal-mining districts would be seriously affected, if the Bill became law, by foreign competition. Not a single word, however, had been said as to the action of this Amendment with respect to local option in causing one district to compete with another. The Amendment, it was clear, would put districts into a very unequal position with regard to competing one with another, and local option of this character would be injurious to the whole body of miners. As to what had been said with reference to the effect it was alleged the Bill would have in increasing foreign competition, he would point out that during the 16 weeks' lock-out of the miners less than 2,000 tons of coal were imported into this country. That was an illustration of how far they were affected by foreign competition. What he was most struck about in regard to the opposition to the Bill was that it came from districts where the men were working 7 and 7½ hours a day. He could have understood the Amendment if it had come from the counties where these men were kept going to the extent of 11 hours a day. But the fact was, that where long hours were worked the men were in favour of this Bill. He believed that this measure ought to apply equally to all miners and to all employers, and that it would be very unfair to allow a body of employers in one portion of the coal-fields to work their men 10 or 11 hours a day, and at the same time to legislate so that other employers could only work their men eight hours a day. The Mover of the Amendment set out by remarking that they had not proved that the miners of this country desired this Bill without the Amendment. He thought it was self-evident that there was not the slightest doubt but that the preponderating majority of the miners of this country had not two opinions, and had decided that there should be no local option or exemption from the operation of the Act. He was not sure whether, if they looked to Northumberland and Durham, they would find that in either of those counties there was a majority in favour of this Amendment. He knew that last year, when he moved the Second Reading of this Bill, he quoted some statistics given by the secretaries from Durham and Northumberland before the Royal Commission on Labour, showing that if every man had been allowed to vote the result would have been in favour of the Bill.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Every man in the mines of the County of Durham is allowed to vote in every ballot that is taken.

MR. WOODS: The difficulty is that the boys are not allowed to vote.

*MR. J. WILSON: I am compelled, for the character of the county, to say that that is not exactly correct.

MR. WOODS (continuing) said, he thought, according to the statement of Mr. Patterson before the Labour Commission, and of Mr. Young, that the boys under 16 were not allowed to give a vote. This Bill would affect a large number of boys who were now working 10 and 10½ hours a day.

An hon. MEMBER: How many boys?

MR. WOODS said, that information on this point could be got from his previous speech reported in *Hansard.*

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. J. LOWTHER) said, he thought it was very undesirable to carry out controversy in this way.

MR. WOODS, proceeding, said, that reference had been made to a letter from the right hon. Member for Midlothian. The reference was made by the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, and he fancied the impression was conveyed to the House that the opinion of the Midlothian miners was in favour of the local option clause. The leader of the Midlothian miners, who waited upon the late Prime Minister last year, stated, however, that almost to a man in that constituency the miners were against the local option idea and in favour of the Bill as it stood. The Mover of the Amendment said the Bill would bring about a great amount of inequality and disturbance in some districts if the local option clause were not carried. That was the very principle underlying their conduct. What they said was that matters were unequal now and unfair; and what they wanted to do was to put every employer in the same position and give them equal facilities for competing in the markets of the world. Who were the advocates of this Bill. They recognised amongst them some of the largest colliery owners in the country. What evidence was given before the Royal Commission on Labour from Wales and Scotland, and some parts of England and from districts to which reference had been made? Almost the unanimous verdict of these men was that they were opposed to the local option idea, and in favour of eight hours from bank to bank. One thing struck him with great force, and that was that most of the opposition to the Bill as it now stood, and its strongest opponents, came from Members sitting on that side of the House. That was very remarkable if they made a comparison of what took place at the beginning of the year and what had taken place to-night. They were discussing at the beginning of last year the Home Rule Bill, and he found that those who wanted to put local option into this Bill were those who were amongst the most strenuous opponents to the insertion of the local option clause for Ulster. He contended that this Amendment would be very unfair in its application, and he would mention here that the employers in the Midland Counties were as strongly opposed to local option as the miners themselves; and he would ask whether it would be fair, in the face of the united opinion of employers and employed, that the House should carry local option into the Bill. Hon. Members would find in this Amendment something that had been overlooked, and that was the machinery which was to be established to carry it into operation. He knew the hon. Member had another Amendment on the Paper to the effect that there should be a ballot taken every three years as to whether the men wished to be exempted from the operation of the Bill; but he asked whether the House would commit itself to the establishment of such machinery as would be required to carry out a ballot every three years. It must be evident to everybody that such a proceeding would create perpetual friction, and they would have one part of the British coal-fields working eight hours a day, another part working 9 hours a day, and still another part working 10 hours a day; and every three years this state of things would be reversed. He thought this Amendment was one of a most harmful character, and one that could not be put into operation without the greatest difficulty. The promoters of the Bill hoped the Committee would support them in maintaining the principle of the measure, which was carried by a majority of 87 this year. They felt sure that the gloomy forebodings of some of the hon. Members who had spoken would never be fulfilled. Every question of an understood or economic character discussed in that House for the past 50 years had been met with the same arguments, but none of the adverse and disastrous results predicted had come about. They had shortened the hours of labour in many instances, giving the people more leisure and a higher rate of wages, without producing any evil; and in this case he hoped the House would not be afraid of maintaining the principle of a practical and useful Bill, which would bring good to many and harm to none.

MR. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W., Newton) said, that speaking for those whom he represented, he found it difficult to say which was the more obnoxious—the Amendment or the Bill in its present shape. If they reconciled themselves to the fact that the House of Commons had committed itself to the principle of interfering with adult male labour, he was afraid that all that remained for them to do was to consider how this principle was to be enforced. That being the case, his opinion was that local option was preferable to the hard rigid rule which the Bill proposed to establish. It had been admitted by those who supported the Bill and by those who most strongly opposed the Amendment that the particular circumstances of the case varied considerably in different localities, and that the difference of time required to get out a given quantity of coal varied in different parts of the country. What stronger argument than that could be adduced in favour of the fairness of allowing the miners in the different parts of the country to decide themselves what would be a fair day's work? Surely if there was one question more than another on which a man of ordinary intelligence was fitted to give an opinion, it was that of deciding the number of hours which it was to his best advantage to work. The Labour Representatives did not consider, however, that the miner had any right to give an opinion on the matter at all, although, curiously enough, they considered him in turn to be the best judge of the time that a third party should or should not be allowed to work. They might, in his opinion, quite as justly deny that a man had a right to eat his dinner because his neighbour had been unable to enjoy his breakfast. The object of the Bill was not to reduce the hours of labour so much as to reduce the amount of the output of coal. He did not believe that there were any representatives of the miners who were not in the House or who were Parliamentary candidates who were in favour of the eight hours from bank to bank. There were doubtless only some miserable 500 or 600 coalowners, on the one hand, whilst there were on the other some 500,000 or 600,000 votes to be obtained from the miners. Moreover, it was said that the wretched owners were divided among themselves on the question. The division of opinion among the owners was due to the fact that the owners of Durham and Northumberland thought one way, whilst the other owners thought the other. He had come to the conclusion that if he voted for local option he should be striking a blow at the district he represented, whilst if he voted against it he should be doing an injustice to other districts. In these circumstances he felt that, as an honest man, he had no course open to him but to refrain from voting either way.

MR. W. ALLEN (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said, the coalowners were supporting this Amendment because if it were adopted the case of the boys in the Durham and Northumberland mines would have to be given up. The hon. Member for Northumberland warned them not to interfere with the customs of the northern counties, and his speech would have been rather convincing if they did not reflect what those customs were. But these customs were that the hewers worked 7 or 7½ hours, while the boys were kept working 10 or 10½ hours. It might be said that the work of these boys was comparatively light, but he believed it was just as hard work as anybody could do, and it was work which had to be done by the boys just at the time when they were developing and before they had got their full strength; and it seemed to him, if they accepted this Amendment, and Northumberland and Durham were allowed to contract out of the Bill, they would be permitting these boys to be driven and worked almost as galley slaves, which was an iniquity which the House of Commons would never tolerate.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): The hon. Gentleman's statement is most unfair and unjust to the men of Northumberland and Durham, of whom he is speaking.

MR. W. ALLEN said, that the work of the boys employed as hand putters was the hardest that could be conceived. They had to work in a stooping position in narrow and ill-ventilated passages at a time of life when they were not fully developed. He repeated that they were driven and worked like galley slaves.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): I deny that.

MR. W. ALLEN said, that these boys worked as hard as any men could do, and it was most unjust that they should be made to do such work for such a number of hours.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): I deny that they are worked like galley slaves.

MR. W. ALLEN said, these boys worked as hard as any men could do in an ill-ventilated place for over 10 hours a day, and it was most unjust that they should be made to do such work for such a number of hours. Injustice would also be done to those connected with the mines in other parts of the country if the Amendment was accepted. The hon. Baronet the Member for Durham, when introducing a deputation the other day to Lord Salisbury, stated that the Durham men were practically united on this question. But in the ballots which had been taken a great number of the men abstained from voting, and did not seem to care very much one way or the other. Under all the circumstances he should certainly vote against the Amendment.

*SIR J. PEASE said, that whilst he did not doubt the ability of the North Country collieries to face this question, they would, if the Bill were passed as it now stood, have to face it at great loss of labour amongst their workpeople. There was not a finer set of boys than those employed in the mines of Durham and Northumberland. It was true they worked longer hours than the men, but they were not working the whole of the 10 hours that they were below ground. They worked practically about 7½ hours. Some lads had, no doubt, very hard work, but the question was whether they were suffering from it, and the Health Returns showed that they were not; neither was there a single complaint from the Government Inspectors. He asked the Committee whether it was reasonable to follow the advice of his hon. Friend the Member for Ince (Mr. Woods), and because one fox had got its tail cut off in the trap, that every other fox should have his tail cut off. The real point which they had to consider in the trade and to look at in the interests of their men was, Would there be employment for the men under the altered circumstances, and would they be able to preserve their trade? He thought that in two minutes he could show the Committee why he held they ought to have local option, and why they believed they would be injured by the Bill. They would, if the Bill passed, have to provide two shifts of boys, and they could not get two sets of boys to begin with. If they had two shifts, each must either work at a less price, or if they got the same price they increased the expenditure, and this must greatly increase the cost of production. He stated on the Second Reading that Northumberland and Durham objected to be placed in the same category as districts which were not affected by foreign competition and by the iron trade, which was at present utterly unproductive. Belgian girders had been put up not far from the House of Commons, and during the present unfortunate moulders' strike castings were coming from abroad in considerable quantities. Competition was thus at their very doors, and in the iron trade they could not lay out a single sixpence for any increased cost of coal. The Bill would therefore be attended with the utmost and gravest mischief. Half the Cleveland furnaces were now using Spanish ore, and if the Bill passed the increased cost of Cleveland iron, amounting to 2s. 6d. per ton, would probably drive the whole of the furnaces to use Spanish ore, on which it was acknowledged there was a less margin of loss—and in some cases a profit. It would, therefore, be madness for the Committee to say to Durham and Northumberland that they must be bound by Act of Parliament to work eight hours a day when they preferred other arrangements which suited them better. He did not hesitate to say that if the Bill became law the firm with which he was connected would have to lay in three out of the 11 collieries which they owned, and thus 700 or 800 men, with their wives and families, would be thrown out of employment. They had heard a great deal of agricultural depression. If the people engaged in the coal and iron and kindred industries were kept well employed, instead of having work taken from them by legislation of this kind, there would be more flour and more meat taken in every cottage, and that would produce a very different state of things in agriculture. The miners were well able to take care of themselves, and why should Parliament interfere with them by legislation which was perfectly uncalled for? So long as they had to look to foreign trade, as they had to in the North, they could not handicap themselves by such legislation as this. He had represented a mining constituency for many years, and the only question he had been asked in connection with this matter was, Would he vote in favour of the miners being free to make any arrangements they liked? He would not detain the Committee any longer, and he would only say, in conclusion, that he should not have spoken so strongly on the subject as he had done if he had not felt that the policy of this Bill was a fatal policy.

Mr. C. M'LAREN wished to say a few words on behalf of the coalowners—of whom he was one—of the Midland district. If this Amendment were carried the Miners' Federation, which was all-powerful in the Midland district, would put the provisions of the Bill into force. If they were to believe hon. Members who had spoken for Durham and South Wales, the Bill would not be put into operation in those districts; so that at the very outset enormous differences and inequalities would be imported into the industry. Everybody knew that at the present time colliery owners were happy if they could make 6d. a ton profit on their coal, and he found that 4d. a ton was the lowest limit which they could put upon coal as the effect of this Bill. If this Bill passed as it stood, the cost of getting coal in the Midlands would be at least 4d. a ton of an increase, and in many cases the increase would be from 6d. to 8d. a ton. In Derbyshire, South Yorkshire, and Nottinghamshire they had coal centres which sent a very large quantity of coal to London. They were, as everybody knew, in very close competition with the Tyne. During the last 12 months the Tyne had put a larger quantity of coal into London at the expense of the Midlands than ever they did before. If, therefore, this Amendment were carried, so great would be the restriction which would be put on the output of the Midlands, that he had no hesitation in saying that the whole of the London Trade from Nottinghamshire and South Yorkshire would be destroyed. It would be absolutely impossible for the Midland owners to send a ton of coal to London. But London was not the only market for the Midlands. They sent an enormous amount of coal to the Eastern Ports for shipment to the Baltic, to France, and to other parts of the world, and that coal was also in direct competition with Durham and Northumberland. If the hon. Gentleman (Sir J. Pease) was right, and they were now at a point at which it was difficult to compete with the foreigner in the export of coal, it was perfectly clear that if this Amendment were carried, and the Midlands were placed in a disadvantageous position with regard to Durham and Northumberland, they could not expect to export any more coal from Derbyshire or South Yorkshire. There was the question of gas contracts, and there was also the question of railway contracts, which, as everybody knew, were of enormous importance to the Midlands, and if they were to be handicapped not merely with the foreigner, but in their competition with two such important districts as Durham and Northumberland, he ventured to say the effect of this Amendment would be destruction to that trade. Supposing Derbyshire adopted the Bill and South Yorkshire refused to adopt the Bill. He would undertake to say the effect of this course would be that South Yorkshire would sell every ton of coal to the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company, the Great Northern Railway Company, and the Midland Railway Company, consumed in that county, and that Derbyshire would have nothing left to sell. He saw the possibility of an annihilation of a large portion of the trade of these counties if the Amendment was carried. And the worst of it would be, that no district would know what was going to happen next. This Amendment, by a provision which stood lower down on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for Merthyr, provided for a ballot to be taken every three years. What was to be the position of the coalowner in Nottinghamshire six months before the period of expiration? His contract for gas coal was to go for a period of 12 months in advance, or his railway coal contract had to go for the same period, and under the terms of the Amendment, taken together with the provision for the ballot, he would be utterly unable to know what price to put upon it. He did not want to say anything on the side of the miners' view. That had been very ably represented that night by those Members who more particularly represented the miners, and expressed by the hon. Member for Ince; but when they had the conditions affecting the coalowners coinciding with the conditions affecting the miners, he thought the Committee ought to pause before they passed an Amendment which had far more widely reaching effects than the Committee were apt to suppose. The Bill itself, in its present form, would make a very considerable change, but the House had accepted the principle of the Bill, and he humbly submitted that that being so it was the duty of the House now to put provisions into the Bill which would make it work with as little friction and as little injury as it were possible to conceive; and if any other hon. Member intervened in this Debate, he should be very glad to hear in what way he should propose to ensure those districts under the Miners' Federation against the unfair competition, the State-protected competition it would be under this Amendment, with the industry of Northumberland and Durham and South Wales. He hoped they would see nothing in this country of local option in trade matters as between one district and another. Surely, if they were deliberately to allow the Legislature or a Government Department to interfere in the ordinary course of trade they would be lessening all those distinguishing features of commerce which had made this country great in the past. They would tie themselves hand and foot, and he ventured to think that even if this Bill did take a step in the direction which many hon. Members opposite thought it did, as perhaps against the right principle in these matters, there was no reason why they should go further and more deeply into what might turn out to be a morass, and so clog their footsteps that any retrocession became impossible. If this Bill passed as it stood, he did not think the coal trade of this country would suffer, for districts, on an average, would be treated all alike, and he had no doubt the difficulties which their Durham friends talked about in working their pits would be counterbalanced by a considerable increase in the price of coal. He believed the working classes throughout the country were, in the main, in favour of this measure both as consumers and as miners. The difficulties of taking ballots of the men to decide as to whether a particular county should be in the Bill or should not be in the Bill were illustrated by the different Amendments which they had heard to-night as to the feeling of the men in Durham and Northumberland. If they could not on an important question of this kind really find out, to the satisfaction of all parties, how the miners of Durham and Northumberland felt he thought it was pretty plain they could not find out their opinion if this Amendment and its corollaries were carried. He strongly opposed the Amendment, and he implored hon. Gentlemen who represented the employers, or hon. Gentlemen who represented the interests of miners, to pause before they voted for it, and he assured them that if they voted for it they would be doing an injury, which he was sure would be very lasting, to one of the largest and most important industries of this country.

Mr. ROBY rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland) said, he thought the hon. Member who had just sat down had talked too much about interests and too little about things more important. For his own part, he was not concerned very much about the talk of foreign competition, nor was he troubled by the fact, which he learned from an hon. Member opposite, that all the coal-owners were against the Bill. That would be, he confessed, rather a temptation to him to vote for the Bill. But he would ask the House before it went to a vote upon this, the only important Amendment to this Bill in his opinion, to consider seriously what they were going to do, and what it was to end in. Every man who had listened to the speeches which had been made that night, and who had studied the matter outside, knew this: that if this Bill were passed in its present shape it was not the only Bill that would be passed. This Bill was but the precursor of many Bills of a similar type that were to follow until they were all hard-bound in Atlantic or Arctic ice; and instead of having free play to work out their own salvation, subject only to the limitations which human kindness imposed upon them, they would be in a position which he for one should not desire to see. If this Bill was the precursor of other Bills, would it not be a very reasonable thing, when they were settling that night or to-morrow the most important Amendment they had to settle on that Bill, that they should seriously ask themselves what were the principles upon which they were going to vote, not only on this Amendment, but all the Amendments and all the Bills that were to follow. For his part he would state to the House clearly what were the lines upon which he should act upon this Amendment. He thought he had been all his life in favour of the limitation of the hours of labour and in favour of the demand of the poor man to have leisure to develop his higher faculties, but he had all his life preached that in his judgment that was best to be got by the action of free men acting together outside the interference of Parliament. And when he saw so many of his hon. Friends coming to Parliament and asking Parliament to adopt another method he beseeched them, and all Radicals in the House, to consider seriously what was the method upon which they were to act. What was the condition of facts that was before them that night? Here was a Bill which said to all the coalminers in all England, wherever they might be, under whatever limitations they might work—whether they were in hot or in cool pits, whether they were in hard or in soft coal, whether they had to walk two miles to the face of the coal and find it broken, or whether they could go down the pit and find fresh coal there to work; which said to every one, strong or weak, old or young, under all the conditions of getting into the pit—whether they wanted to work a longer or shorter time according to their local circumstances, "You must all work the same time. You must work not more than eight hours whether you will or no, whether you are a man with 12 children, or whether you are a bachelor. You are only to work eight hours, and no more." There were only two conditions upon which he would ever submit, as a free man, to vote for or support that. The first was: this that it should be proved to him that it was for the general interest that this should be done. If that be proved, there was the first condition he wanted. He had said that in his sober judgment the limitations of the hours of labour to eight all over the country for every working man would be for the general advantage, and therefore on that ground he had no objection to take to the present proposal. But what was the second thing he demanded? He demanded that, if they departed from the general eight hours principle and came to a specific eight hours in a specific trade, before ever they ventured to legislate in that House for that trade, he submitted to the common sense and good judgment of the House that they ought to have behind them general concurrence and opinion amongst the persons who were engaged in that trade. Did anyone say they had got that that night? Would his hon. Friend the Member for Ince (Mr. Woods) venture to tell him that of the hundreds of thousands of men engaged in mining in this country he had an immensely preponderating opinion, well defined and intelligent, in favour of this general proposal?

MR. WOODS: A large majority; a very large majority.

MR. STOREY had not asked for that, though he would even dispute that as being the fact. But if there were absolute proof of it, he would yet put it to his hon. Friend that this proposed change would effect not merely interests and profits, but also the general well-being and life of hundreds of thousands of his fellow working men, and that before he made the change the hon. Member should be assured that the enormous preponderance of the people in that trade demanded it. The hon. Member who had just spoken—he was a coal owner—said with a sneer, "We have heard a great deal of Durham and Northumberland to-night." So the Committee had, and they could not hear about a more intelligent part of the country. He did not speak of the coal owners there or of newspaper bodies like himself; but he said of the working men of these counties that there did not exist a body of men more competent than they to give an opinion either upon general politics—well, nearly all the Members from these counties were Radical, and what could he say more than that?—or upon books, or upon the history of their country, and, above all, upon the common circumstances of their daily lives. These men had a very clear opinion on this subject. He had the means of ascertaining all round the district what they thought, and he asserted that an enormous preponderance of the intelligent workmen, the men who were accustomed to think of these things and to guide their fellow-men, said to this honourable House, "Gentlemen, you are sent to London to legislate for us according to our wishes, and our desires, unless our wishes conflict with the general interest, and we say to you that if you choose to legislate for men who want this Bill, legislate if you like; but so long as we are satisfied that our interests and our desires are better served by the existing condition of things we beg you to refrain from interfering with our arrangements." He would therefore say, if the Committee would have an Eight Hours Bill for those who wanted it, then in the name of freedom and in the name of common sense let them not impose it upon those who did not want it.

*MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid.) said, he would not detain the Committee very long, because he gathered from the promoters of the Bill that they were desirous of taking a vote; but as one who could speak with some authority for the workmen of Durham, and who had taken some part in arranging not only for wages but for reductions of hours, he desired to add his quota to the discussion. As it appeared to be a time of soul-searching he would put himself on the altar for a minute or two. He was against State interference with the hours of adult labour all round where men could combine. He opposed, two or three years ago, a similar Bill when it was before the House, not because he was against a reduction of hours, but because he was in favour of obtaining them in the most expeditious and permanently satisfactory manner possible. He said this, because he had now to vote for a species of State interference in voting for the Amendment. But as the choice was between two evils he was going to take the lesser; as the issue was between giving a county a voice in the fixing of hours and fixing a rigid unworkable law, he would be best serving the interests of those who sent him there, and be most in harmony with their views, by voting for what he had called the lesser evil. He was one who was called an old Trades Unionist, stereotyped, fossilised, ready to be placed in some museum of antiquities and curiosities. He had always been, and was now, a believer in free and full negotiation between employer and employed. He recognised that the House had never interfered with the hours of adult labour, but only with those of boys and juveniles in factories.

An hon. MEMBER: And of women.

*MR. J. WILSON said that women were not concerned here, and he therefore left that section of workers out of consideration. He also recognised that the short hours that had come to them in the North and in Scotland had been secured and kept by Trades Organisation, and that it was only where the organisation became weak that this advantage had been lost. He therefore believed in free and full negotiation between employers and employed in preference to any rigid, fixed, unalterable law that Parliament might pass. The Committee, he was afraid, had had a rather meagre view of the trade and occupation of miners presented to them by some hon. Members; and they would forgive him when he said that no question had come before the House on which grosser ignorance had been manifested than had been shown with regard to miners and the technicalities of their work. Even the hon. Member in charge of the Bill had confessed his ignorance of these technicalities, although he no doubt had had the most complete coaching from experienced practical men. He thanked the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) for the high eulogy, not unjustified, he had expressed on the men of Durham and Northumberland. They were able to take care of themselves. When the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Mr. Allen) talked about the boys of Durham being galley slaves, he (Mr. Wilson) asked himself whether he was fully developed, for he was once one of those boys. He went down the mines when he was about 10 or 11 years of age, at a time when the working hours were three or four hours a day longer than they now were; and whether he was fully developed in brain and physique he would allow the House to say. As to the speech of the hon. Member for the Bosworth Division (Mr. C. M'Laren), he would assure him that when the owners of the Midlands sent round the hat they would be relieved in the hour of their dire distress and necessity; but he had not heard of many owners in the Midlands going into the Bankruptcy Court, and they had been for some years in competition with Durham and Northumberland. He was confident that the hon. Member had a much greater circle of learning than he could lay claim to; but he would recommend to his careful reading that one of the Ten Commandments which said: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods." It struck him, during the whole of the hon. Member's speech, that he was coveting the commercial and industrial superiority of the owners of Durham and Northumberland. The hon. Member left out of account the idea of the promoters of this Bill that it was necessary to give miners more leisure and greater exemption from danger, and all he could say for the Bill was that it would place the owners in the Midlands in a more advantageous position than the Amendment would.

MR. C. M'LAREN: I said nothing of the kind. I objected to local option because that would place us in a worse position. It is my hon. Friend who covets our goods.

*MR. J. WILSON understood that the hon. Member entered into a description of the different classes of coal—gas, railway, &c.—to show that the owners in the Midlands were in an inferior position to those of Durham and Northumberland, and argued that as they were not now able to compete with these two northern counties, local option should be refused in order that the Midland colliers should impose upon the miners of the two northern counties the rigid eight hours' day, and thus restrict their opportunity for competition. He regretted that the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme (Mr. Allen) was not in his place, for he uttered words which, in his opinion, were unbecoming. He did not like to use harsh words about anyone, but the hon. Member's remarks about the Durham boys were untrue, and were insulting to the men of Durham. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke), speaking when he was surrounded by his supporters, also said that the boys of Durham and Northumberland were like galley slaves. He must repeat that such an expression was an insult, unbecoming, and uncalled-for. Did the Committee think that these were boys brought from some workhouse, sent by

Boards of Guardians to be apprenticed in the mines to bring profit to the pocket of the men? These boys were the men's own lads, their own flesh and blood. The men had, as lads, passed through the same experience, and knew exactly what was best for them, and the boys were confident that their fathers, and brothers, and kinsmen would do the best they could for them. It had been said that the boys under 16 were not allowed to vote, and some stress was laid upon the statement that the putters were below 16 years of age. But the hand-putters did not put at 16; they were young men of 18, 19, and 20. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, when he took his excursion down one of the northern coal mines, went with his mind biassed; and a biassed man was generally able to extract the ideas and "facts" which were in accordance with his own preconceived opinions. In the North some of the hand-putters were married men, and, in nearly every case, above 18 years of age, and were not the boys that they had been described—below 16 years of age. They were young men, and there was hardly one of them but had a vote in the ballot that was submitted upon the eight hours' question, and consequently they were not excluded from recording their ideas. If he understood the Amendment aright, it would give every boy a right to vote; it would take into its cognisance not only every man above 20, but every workman in the pit, the boys below 16 being able to turn the scale of voting; and if hon. Members thought that local option would turn the scale, why should they fear local option? For his part, he did not think they should discuss this question from the view of foreign competition. It was not before his mind, and he had never expressed any fear in that direction. He had heard it said that leaders of Trades Unions and workmen should not have any regard for the result of any legislative enactment. That was not his idea; he thought they should have full and due regard to the results of any enactment they might pass through this House or through this Committee. He believed the adoption of this resolution would be in accord with the generally expressed view of the Trades Union Congress. He saw the hon. Member for West Ham (Mr. Keir Hardie) opposite, and perhaps the hon. Member, who had been already referred to, would forgive him for referring to him again. The hon. Member moved a resolution in the Trades Union Congress of 1891 to this effect: "that legislation restricting hours of labour to eight per day should be enforced in all trades and occupations, save where an organised majority of the members by ballot-voting were proved against the same." It might be thought that applied to a whole trade. Why was the majority of the trade put in that resolution? Simply because there were divergencies and differences between the different trades, and consequently one trade did not bind another. That being the case, he said they were right in supporting this local option. The hon. Member for Ince (Mr. Woods) in his speech used two words for the purpose of impressing the minds of hon. Members, and these words were "unfair" and "unequal." He referred entirely to trade, but he had no word for the workmen. The hon. Member for Eccles (Mr. Roby) spoke about competition between districts—that was to say, that if they had a uniform Bill passed for the whole of the country they would avoid competition between counties. That idea implied there was a uniformity of conditions all over the coal mines. If they spoke about an Eight Hours Bill for the engineering trade they had a uniformity of conditions. [*Cries of* "No!"] He was going to tell them what it was if they would only listen before saying "No." They might take a man from the Tyne who was in an engineering works and place him in a shop in London, and the conditions surrounding him would be as nearly as possible uniform. ["No, no!"] He said, yes; the same conditions were in operation in the one shop as in the other, but they could not speak of uniformity in coal mining when nature was against them. They might as well pass an Act of Parliament to say every man should be of one stature. All nature was against them. He ventured to say that the Forest of Dean would not be able to compete with the thick seams of the Midlands, and they could not make uniform nature's conditions by any Act of Parliament; therefore the men in the various counties, knowing their own situation, should be left to settle their differences between their employers and themselves. He would like to draw attention to one or two expressions of ignorance that had fallen from hon. Members who ought to know better, because one of the hon. Members had been a working miner and the other had become a professor by theory. The Member for Ince (Mr. Woods) had been a working miner, and in 1893, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill, he said he would undertake to prove that the average time in going and returning from work in the pits was nearly a quarter of an hour each way. That was not the experience in any locality that he (Mr. Wilson) knew of. The other was the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke). The right hon. Member, speaking in the Forest of Dean, said that if every man was to be punished who should be more than eight hours below, the hours would have to be still further reduced to make it impossible that any one, even by chance, should be more than eight hours below. He (Mr. Wilson) was a miner, and when he heard expressions like those he had commiseration for the ignorance of such persons.

*Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, perhaps he might be permitted to point out that that referred to an Amendment that stood lower down on the Paper, and upon that Amendment they would have the opportunity of discussing the question.

*Mr. J. WILSON said, it was one of the difficulties they had to meet; how were they to get the man who went down at 6 come up first except they put a ticket round his neck to show that he was the first to go down. Had the right hon. Gentleman ever been down a pit?

Sir C. W. DILKE said, this showed the inconvenience of discussing the question interrogatively. He agreed with the hon. Member, and his argument was directed to that very point.

*Mr. J. WILSON said, he wished to point out when such ignorance was manifested—[*Cries of* "Question!"] He thought he was speaking to the Question, and during the few minutes he had occupied the attention of the Committee he had not diverged from the Question. If he had he begged leave to apologise to the Committee; but what he wanted to say was that when there was such ignorance in the Legislature, there was no wonder there was confusion of mind outside. Now he would appeal again to the Irish Members. If there was one part of the country where the Irish Members had strong and solid supporters it was the part he came from. He had often heard the Irish Members say that a Bill was being forced upon Ireland by the English votes and not by the Irish, and he would venture to say that if this Amendment were lost it would be lost this evening by the Irish votes. The Bill did not affect Ireland, and to throw out the Amendment would be forcing upon the English workmen a thing they did not require, and it would be done by the Irish vote. He hoped the Irish Members would hesitate before they gave the vote they did on the Second Reading. If the Bill did not interest them he would appeal to them to take a different course, and not do anything to repel those who had been their staunch supporters.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR (Leeds, Central) said, he was surprised that the hon. Member for Eccles (Mr. Roby) should a short time ago have asked the Chairman to impose the Closure on this discussion, because he did not hesitate to say that from beginning to end of this Debate the argument had been entirely on one side. He could not think this Debate had continued at all too long; nay, he did not think it had continued long enough. There were a great many hon. and right hon. Gentlemen whose opinions they would have been glad to have upon this question, and he could not help thinking it was an extraordinary circumstance that upon an Amendment of this importance and character they had not had the least guidance from any Member of the Government. Upon a Bill so important as this they would have liked to know the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, and they would very much have liked to have heard the Chief Secretary on this subject, upon which he held very strong views. To proceed from the Front Bench to the back, they would have been glad to hear the views of the hon. Member for Haddington

(Mr. Haldane), as it was well known that he was opposed to the principle of the Bill, though he had heard that the hon. Member might vote against this Amendment. They would very much like to know why the hon. Gentleman proposed to vote against it. There was his right hon. Friend the Member for Bodmin (Mr. Courtney), who was always ready to give an impartial judgment upon every question. The right hon. Gentleman had been a Member of the Commission, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman was acquainted with this matter. Again, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) had not uttered a word in this Debate, yet surely this was a question of sufficient motive for them to have heard what he had to say. And, lastly, the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Ham had been directly appealed to in this Debate, and he must say he trusted before the Debate came to a conclusion the hon. Member would be persuaded to stand by the answer he made or state he had changed his opinion, and if he had changed, why he had done so. Before he proceeded to consider the larger question raised by the Amendment of the hon. Member he should like to say a word or two on the Amendment to the Amendment that stood first in his name. The hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. Thomas) proposed to make the county the unit of local option. He did not consider himself that the county would be altogether a satisfactory unit to take. There was no doubt very much to be said for taking the individual colliery as the unit, but if a district was to be taken he did not think the county was the proper district; what they wanted was that it should constitute an area of similar conditions in respect to the mining industry, and he did not think they had any reason to suppose that the geographical limitation of the county would correspond exactly to the limitation of areas of similar condition. It might be that such an area would embrace more than one county, for it might be that more than one district would embrace more than one such area. He listened to the dispute between the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. Thomas) and the hon. Member for Rhondda (Mr. Abraham); he was not competent to decide the merits of it, but he would assume there was in the mind of the hon. Member who opposed the Amendment just such a difference as he had described. They had one hon. Member representing South Wales moving the Amendment, and another hon. Member representing South Wales also, opposing it. He did not think the county would be a satisfactory unit for the application of local option, and, in his opinion, it would be far better to trust to the discretion of the Home Secretary, who would be guided somewhat by the districts allotted to the Inspectors of Mines, and still more by the organisations which existed among coalowners and miners. He attached considerable importance to his Amendment, and even more importance to the one following it; but of course he recognised that both were of small importance when compared with the question raised by the original Amendment, and he wished to make the point plain. He should not necessarily ask the judgment of the House on the Amendment, he had placed on the Paper, and if it were rejected he should vote with complete conviction in favour of the Amendment proposed by the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. Thomas). If his Amendment were accepted those in favour of the principle of local option could vote for the Amendment as amended. Now he came to the merits of the Amendment itself, and he should like first of all to call attention to this, that he supposed no Government would have taken upon itself the responsibility of imposing legislation of this kind without a preliminary inquiry of some kind or other. The Government had been prodigal of facilities, but they had not chosen to adopt this measure as their own, but where the Government were feared to tread the hon. Member for Ince (Mr. Woods) and the hon. Member for Normanton (Mr. Pickard), whom they had not heard to-night, were not afraid to rush in. It was perfectly true that this question had been investigated, and very thoroughly investigated, during the last 20 years. It was not until after the Second Reading of this Bill that the Royal Commission on Labour reported, and that Report was, in a sense, adverse to this Bill in every particular; and not only that, but the chief promoters of this

Bill, who represented the miners, declined to appear before the Commission and give evidence, though they had never explained why they refused. Perhaps they might say they had no confidence in it, but, at all events, in the earlier period the hon. Member for Ince (Mr. Woods) did not show any want of confidence in it, for within a few days after the appointment of the Commission the hon. Member wrote offering to give evidence. That was in April, 1891, and it was not until a month or two later, though before the Commission began to take evidence, that the representatives of the Federation of Miners wrote to say they had passed a resolution declining to appear before the Commission; declining to give evidence, information, or to help the Commission in any way; and the consequence was that they had not the advantage of hearing the evidence of the hon. Member for Ince (Mr. Woods), the hon. Member for Normanton (Mr. Pickard), or Mr. Ashton. If the Miners' Federation felt that want of confidence in the Labour Commission, and were unable or unwilling to assign any reason for it, they would not be surprised if it was inferred that they declined to have their case investigated because it was a bad one. He opposed this Bill on the Second Reading, and he did not pretend for one moment that the adoption of this Amendment would make it to him an acceptable Bill. Quite the contrary; but without some Amendment of this kind, and unless the principle of local option was introduced, this Bill would establish an intolerable tyranny, and nothing short of that. He would ask what moral right had the House to insist that the miners should carry on their work in a way different to that in which they now carried it on and with which they were perfectly satisfied? He would even go further, and begged the Committee to ask themselves whether they had got the power to enforce legislation of this kind upon districts unwilling to receive it. It must be clear to those who would look at the question impartially that the House of Commons was now being invited to enter upon an exceedingly dangerous course, of which it was impossible to foresee the end. They were told that if this Amendment were carried the Bill would be lost. Well, as an opponent of the Bill, he did not deny that personally he should regard such a result with a considerable degree of complacency. From the standpoint of those who voted for the Second Reading of the Bill, at the same time reserving the right to vote for this Amendment, he would ask why the adoption of this Amendment would be fatal to the Bill? That was really the essential question to which they demanded a clear answer. During the Debate he had listened for an answer, and the only answer he had been able to gather was that uniformity was necessary in order to prevent competition between one district and another. He must say he had listened to the calm way in which the doctrine had been put forward, or, at all events, assumed, that it was the business of Parliament to help one district against the competition of another.

Mr. Woods rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put;" but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR (continuing) said, that surely such a doctrine as that had never before been put forward in the history of Parliament. The hon. Member for Ince (Mr. Woods) told them the aim of the Bill was to cure inequality by putting all upon the same footing. Had it never occurred to the hon. Member for Ince there were certain differences between one district and another, between one man and another, and that the Bill would not produce a true equality? He would also remind the hon. Member for Ince and the hon. Member for Eccles (Mr. Roby) that when they said, or assumed, it was the duty of Parliament to protect one district against the competition of another, that such a doctrine applied to wages as well as hours.

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS [*changed from* "CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)"] (*re-committed*) BILL.—(No. 348.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in the Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 23, inclusive, agreed to.

Clause 24.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, his right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin) had notice of an Amendment to this clause; perhaps the Minister in charge would consent to suspend Progress until the next day, when his right hon. Friend would be in his place.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden) said, the Amendment was inadmissible, because this was simply a Consolidation Bill. Under the circumstances he hoped the right hon. Baronet would not stop the progress of a measure which was for the advantage of an interest the good of which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) had so much at heart.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) thought it right to say that if the Government allowed any change in a Consolidation Bill in the direction indicated by the Amendment then he should oppose the Bill. The only ground upon which the Bill could be allowed to pass was that it was a Consolidation Bill, and in no way trenched upon the existing law, but if that principle were departed from it would become an opposed Bill to be included among those not to be proceeded with this Session.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby) hoped the objection would not be persisted in. A Consolidation Bill such as this should not be made the means of introducing a most serious amendment of the law. The Bill was much desired by those entrusted with the administration of the law and generally by the agricultural interest, and it would be a misfortune if anything were done to prevent its passing.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, he could quite understand why the Amendment should be refused to a Bill of this kind, and a similar objection would apply to a proposal he had to amend another Bill for the prevention of cruelty to children. He should certainly object to the discussion of an Amendment of the nature indicated.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, he did not like to press the objection, but it would really make no difference if the Committee were completed to-morrow, when his right hon. Friend would be present.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he should be present now.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, that was not possible.

Sir W. HARCOURT said, if there was any prospect of the Amendment being entertained he would not object to Progress being reported, but now if the right hon. Member for Sleaford were present the Amendment could not possibly be entertained in connection with this Bill.

***Sir M. HICKS-BEACH** said, he would not press his objection.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time To-morrow.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 353.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked, would the right hon. Gentleman undertake that appointments should be made by competitive examinations?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) said, yes; that was certainly the intention.

Committee report Progress: to sit again To-morrow.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 342.)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, he was anxious to see the Bill passed; but inasmuch as this Consolidation Bill from the Lords altered the age limit as laid down in the Act recently passed, he must object to it.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) said, his hon. Friend was mistaken, the Bill did nothing of the kind, and if he would allow the Bill to go into Committee he would assure him on the point.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he should certainly object to any such alteration.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he had given notice of a couple of Amendments, one of which had a bearing upon the question just raised, but he was anxious that the Bill should pass, and would do nothing to block its progress by insisting upon his right to move an Amendment. He understood that the Government would not listen to any Amendment as being contrary to the understanding in relation to a Consolidation Bill. Not objecting, therefore, to the Bill proceeding, he must insist that the age limit should not be altered.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2.

***The ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Sir J. RIGBY, Forfar) said, that upon this clause a good deal of misapprehension had arisen. By the passing of the Bill of the present Session, introduced by his hon. and learned Friend (Sir R. Webster), alterations were made upon three points in Sections 1, 5, and 6 of the Act of 1889, but no alteration was made in the age of children in respect to offences mentioned in the third section of that Act, and those parts of Clause 2 of the present Bill, which had reference to offences under the third section of that Act, necessarily kept the age of the children as it was left by the former Act—boys under 14, girls under 16. It had been suggested to him that the Interpretation Clause in the Act of the present Session made some difference where it interpreted a child as meaning under 16; but this interpretation was to prevail except where the context otherwise required, and Section 3 of the Act of 1889 plainly and clearly set forth that boys must be under 14, and a child under 14 could not by reason of the Interpretation Clause become a child of 16. This point was raised before the Joint Committee. It was possible there may have been some mistake in the Act of this Session, but it would be amending and not consolidating the law unless there were inserted the words "boys under the age of 14." There was no Interpretation Clause in the present Bill, for the reason that in one place a child of 14 was spoken of, in another of 16, and in another of 11, and nowhere was the word "child" left to be interpreted as a child under 16. It would be found that the word "child" in the later clauses meant child in respect to whom an offence was charged in the earlier part of the Bill. In cases under Section 3 of the Act of 1889 would be meant boys under 14, girls under 16, and all other cases would be governed by the Act of this Session.

Mr. CONYBEARE thought the matter was not unimportant. There were cases where boys under 16 were to be permitted to be subjected to all the influences, dangers, temptations of being in a public-house at night, and so forth. From the account of the Attorney General it did appear that this matter had been considered, and that a broad line of distinction had been drawn, as he thought, wrongly, and so probably did others, but in the position that this was a Consolidation Bill only, and that of necessity it must go forward this Session, he supposed they must bow to the inevitable. If his hon. Friend the Member for Battersea did not press his desire to include boys under 16 within the protecting clauses of the Act he would not attempt to prevent the Bill passing. Still, he knew there was a strong feeling among many Members that boys up to the age of 16 ought to be entitled to the same measure of protection as girls under 16, and if this Consolidation Bill were allowed to go forward, perhaps the Attorney General would be good enough to consider the possibility of bringing in an amending Bill next Session. There were other points to be considered, and seeing there had been so near an approach to unanimity as to the object of this legislation there would probably be no difficulty in carrying through an amending Bill.

Mr. JOHN BURNS said, he had only objected because it appeared to him there was an intention in the Bill, which was merely a Consolidation Bill, to alter the principle upon which the age was laid down in the Bill passed earlier in the Session. It did seem to him that the legal advisers of Her Majesty's Government might have seized the opportunity of the Lords' Consolidation Bill to make the age throughout all the clauses and for all offences 16 years. But the balance of advantage was in favour of the Bill being allowed to go through, and rather than block it he would waive all objection, but to the sympathetic mind of the Attorney General he commended the subject, and hoped he would introduce an amending Bill next Session.

Mr. ASQUITH said, of course his hon. and learned Friend could give no undertaking of that kind for next Session. To adopt any other course than had been pursued with the present Bill would have been to depart from the usual practice in regard to Consolidation Bills. The Bill accurately represented the clauses as they appeared in the Act passed in the present Session, and though personally he quite sympathised with the view expressed by his hon. Friend, and did not understand why the distinction in age should have been made, yet, however desirable it might seem to make the change, to do so would be to forsake precedent and to introduce controversial matter into what was simply a Consolidation Bill and nothing else.

Mr. T. M. HEALY asked the right hon. Gentleman whether there was any reason to expect that, with the volume of statistics, next Session they would be confronted with a repealing Act as well as this?

Mr. ASQUITH said, he earnestly hoped not.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 9, inclusive, agreed to.

Clause 10.

Mr. ASQUITH said, he had an Amendment to propose to this clause; the addition of words to bring the clause into strict conformity with the existing law, the utmost care having been taken to secure that no more than this was done.

Amendment proposed, in page 9, line 22, after the word "health," to insert the words

"or that any offence mentioned in the Schedule to this Act has been or is being committed in respect of such a child."

Page 9, line 25, after "aforesaid," insert

"or that any such offence as aforesaid has been or is being committed in respect of the child." —(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining Clauses and Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

COPYHOLD (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.
[*Lords.*]—(No. 344.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

Verbal Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 to 32, inclusive, agreed to.

Clause 33.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) said, he had an Amendment to propose which would not involve any alteration of the law, but would bring the Bill into conformity with the existing law. The clause provided that where any money in the case of settled estates was paid in respect of enfranchisements to Trustees then the Trustees should apply this, subject to the consent of the Board of Agriculture, in a certain way. Under the Act of 1871 such money could be expended on permanent improvements without instruction, and the object of his Amendment was to bring the money paid to Trustees from enfranchisements of copyholds into the same position as money paid under the Settled Land Act to Trustees. Therefore, he moved, in line 5, the omission of the words "subject to the consent of the Board of Agriculture," and the words down to line 20, in order to insert the words

"in the same manner as though such were capital money arising under the Settled Land Act."

This would involve no alteration of the law, but though he formally moved the Amendment he would not press it against the opinion of the Attorney General if he were to say that it involved an alteration of the law. He was advised on good authority that it would be simply consolidating a provision from the Settled Land Act under the terms of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words from "way," to end of line 20, and insert the words

"in the same manner as though such were capital money arising under the Settled Land Act."—(*Mr. J. W. Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

*SIR J. RIGBY said, so far as he could follow the proposal he was inclined to agree with the hon. Member that to accept the Amendment would not involve an alteration of the law, but it was a somewhat complicated matter, and he desired to consider it, and the Amendment could be inserted on Report if it should be found, as he thought it would be found, in accordance with the statement that no change in the law would be effected thereby.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said, as there had been an Amendment and therefore must be a Report to consider, he would not press the Amendment at this stage.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clauses 34 to 93, inclusive, agreed to.

Clause 94.

*MR. TOMLINSON said, he desired to insert a formal Amendment in line 38, by inserting the words—

"and any person entitled to interest for any term of years originally granted for 99 years and upwards."

The word "tenant" in this Bill covered the definition of his words in the existing Copyhold Act, but the word "owner" was applied in certain cases as distinct from tenant. It was intended by this consolidation to make the expression apply generally.

SIR J. RIGBY undertook to consider this point also on Report.

Clause agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

Schedule.

*MR. TOMLINSON suggested that on Report it should be considered whether lines 9 and 10 should be omitted, because in a Bill intended to apply to Copyhold Acts only it was not desirable to deal with a section of the Universities Estates Act of 1860 merely because that section related to copyholds.

*SIR J. RIGBY thought, in consolidating Acts relating to copyholds, it was desirable everything of that character should be included, but he would, however, consider it.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Thursday.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 340.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [2nd August].

MR. ASQUITH hoped that no objection would be raised to passing this stage of a Bill which had with unanimous consent passed in another place. He did not know that any objection had been urged to the Second Reading, and to points of detail he would give every attention in Committee.

*MR. TOMLINSON took exception to the provision in the second clause for the appointment of a check weigher for a term of years. This matter was important in the interest of those for whose sake the appointment was made. Check weighers were appointed by the workmen to check the weighing of the man appointed by the employers, and it might happen that by the extension of the works the number of men employed might greatly increase, and a man who received his appointment at the instance of, say, 50 miners might not find favour with a body numbering 200. This was a point important enough to demand consideration, and the proper time for that was on the Second Reading.

Mr. ASQUITH said, if any serious objection were offered to that he would be quite prepared to drop the provision, for he did not regard it as essential. The first clause was the important part of the Bill.

Objection being taken, Debate further adjourned till To-morrow.

QUARRIES BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 341.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, he had on a former occasion mentioned a small Amendment he desired to propose, the substitution of 30 for 20. If the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to accept it he would move at once, not troubling him with reasons.

Mr. ASQUITH indicated a negative.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, he understood that the Bill provided that open quarries, which now were under the Factories Act and subject to the inspection of the Sanitary Authority of the district so far as fencing was concerned, should be removed from that jurisdiction and be subjected to Regulations under the Metalliferous Mines Act, because the getting of minerals from deep quarries was attended with some danger to the workmen. Certain quarries in a country district with which he was acquainted were perhaps 30 feet deep on the side of a hill, for instance, and were used for getting chalk or stone material for roads, and occasioned no sort of danger to anyone, except when they were near a road and required fencing, which was a matter far more likely to be attended to by the Sanitary Authority than by the Inspector of Metalliferous Mines. The object of his Amendment was to restrict the operation of the Bill to quarries 30 feet deep instead of 20, excluding the smaller quarries only used for getting chalk or stone or sand, and which would be better left under the present jurisdiction and inspection.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "twenty," and insert the word "thirty."—*(Sir M. Hicks-Beach.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'twenty' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. ASQUITH said, it was somewhat curious that when the Bill was in another place Lord Cross took objection to the limitation of 20 feet, not, however, because he wished to substitute 30, but because he thought that 20 feet was a great deal too deep. So there was a certain diversity of counsel among authorities on the other side. He was afraid he could not assent to the substitution of 30 for 20 because—leaving out the question of fencing—so far as quarrying for minerals was concerned, it was desirable that where a quarry had reached the minimum limit of safety, reported by experts to be 20 feet, then the Inspector should have power to enter and inspect the works in the interest and for the protection of the workmen employed. The power of the Sanitary Authority did not extend beyond requiring a quarry to be fenced when near a highway, and the proposal in the Bill was to transfer all powers to the Inspector of Metalliferous Mines. He would be content, however, to leave with the Sanitary Authority the power to control the fencing, for he did not attach so much importance to that, and the Mines Inspectors had quite enough to do, and would not probably discharge this duty better than the Sanitary Authority did. He must, however, retain the limit at 20 feet for quarries to be subjected to inspection.

*Sir M. HICKS-BEACH said, he did not want to stand in the way of the Bill, and all the more that he was certain that no Inspector of Metalliferous Mines would come near their chalk quarries.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2.

Mr. ASQUITH, in pursuance of what he had said, moved the omission of the words, in line 16, from "and" to "1887," thus taking out the transfer to the Inspector of the control exercised by the Sanitary Authority in regard to fencing.

Amendment proposed, in line 16, to leave out the words from "and" to "1887."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

Schedule.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, it was important to know what sections were repealed, but he observed that the references in the Schedule were Sections 15 to 18, 20 to 22, and so on. Did that mean inclusive?

Mr. ASQUITH thought there was no doubt that was the meaning, but he would look into it and, if necessary, insert the word "inclusive" on Report.

Bill reported, with Amendments; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Ordered, That the several Accounts and Papers which have been presented to the House in this Session of Parliament, relating to the Revenues of India, be referred to the consideration of a Committee of the whole House.

Resolved, That this House will To-morrow resolve itself into the said Committee.—(*Mr. Secretary Fowler.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill,

Changed from—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Bill.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill.

Changed from—

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 12) (Grand Canal, &c.) Bill, with Amendments.

LOCAL COURTS OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND) [EXPENSES].

Order for Committee thereupon read, and discharged.

LARCENY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

[*Lords*].—(No. 338.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL.

[*Lords*].—(No. 354.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.

(No. 349.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION BILL.—(No. 95.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to any persons appointed or employed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make further provision with respect to the Congested Districts Board for Ireland.—(*Mr. T. E. Ellis.*)

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Mr. ASQUITH gave notice that at the next Sitting the Chancellor of the Exchequer would move—

> "That the proceedings on the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order Sittings of the House."

Mr. TOMLINSON asked, was it intended to prolong the Sitting to a late hour?

Mr. ASQUITH earnestly hoped there would be no necessity for that.

House adjourned at a quarter before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 14th August 1894.

NEW PEER.

The Right Honourable Sir Horace Davey, Knight, one of the Lord Justices of Appeal, having been appointed a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary under the provisions of the Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876, with the dignity of a Baron for life, by the style and title of Baron Davey of Fernhurst in the county of Sussex, was (in the usual manner) introduced.

ALIENS BILL.

The Marquess of LONDONDERRY: I wish to ask the noble Marquess (Lord Salisbury) a question of which I have given him private notice. It is, what course he proposes to adopt with regard to the Aliens Bill, which passed its Second Reading in your Lordships' House a few weeks ago? I ask the question because considerable anxiety has been evinced with regard to the future of the Bill in the seaport towns of England near which I reside. Consequently, I hope to hear from the noble Marquess that he is not going to allow the measure to drop.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: The measure is still on your Lordships' Order Paper, and I have still the same strong conviction which I had when I submitted it to the House as to the importance of the provisions proposed. But the same night on which it was adopted in this House by a large majority the Leader of the House of Commons was asked whether he would give time for its discussion in the other House. There is no doubt that the Government is entirely master of the time of the House of Commons, and that they have not only the power of rejecting a Bill which has been discussed, but they have the power to refuse the time to have it discussed at all. The Leader of the House of Commons stated in emphatic language—in very unusually forcible language—that he would not find time for the discussion of this Bill. I hope against hope that in that view he may not persevere, and that he may see reason to give an opportunity for the discussion of a Bill which undoubtedly has excited a great deal of sympathy out-of-doors. But until I see some chance of its being discussed in the House of Commons it seems to me idle to go further with it in this House. Your Lordships have already been pleased to express by a large majority your approval of the principle of the Bill. As soon as I see any chance of its being discussed—I do not say passed—in the House of Commons I shall ask your Lordships to consider the details of it.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): I should not have interposed in the little comedy between the two noble Marquesses, but I should like to say a few words on the point whether a Bill is to be discussed in the other House or not. That will depend on what would be the form and the character of the Bill when it left this House. It seems to be a somewhat unreasonable proceeding to consider in this House whether a Bill is going to be discussed in the other House at a time when it is quite uncertain what its form will be. The noble Marquess says the Bill was carried by a large majority; but the majority relatively to the number of supporters of the noble Marquess in this House was by no means large—quite the contrary; and the noble Duke who voted for the Second Reading of the Bill expressed himself as not being supposed to support one-half of it. The noble Duke thought it was a pity that the Bill was not divided into two parts, and expressed dissent from that part by which the noble Marquess sets the greater store. Under those circumstances, it would be quite premature to consider what would be done with the Bill in the other House—at all events, till we know what it will be as it leaves this House.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN asked the Prime Minister, having given private notice to the Lord Privy Seal, whether, as the Second Reading of the Scotch Local Government Bill was down for that day, and as the Committee stage would probably be taken on Thursday, he would consent to the House meeting at 3 o'clock on Thursday instead of a quarter past 4? That arrangement would be convenient to a great many Members of the House.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY and LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (The Earl of Rosebery): My Lords, I had not heard anything of this question before I entered the House. Notice to my noble Friend the Lord Privy Seal is not essentially the same thing as notice to myself, but I think the case is even stronger than the noble Earl puts it. The Equalisation of Rates Bill is also down for Thursday, and, therefore, I am all the more willing to accede to the noble Earl's suggestion.

THE NEW INLAND REVENUE AFFIDAVITS.

The Duke of RUTLAND moved, as the Lord President had stated the other day, there would be no opposition to the Return he asked for, for copies of the new Inland Revenue affidavits, with the proposed Schedules.

Motion agreed to.

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Moved,—

"That the Lord Kensington be appointed to take the Chair in Committee of the Whole House this day in the absence of the Chairman of Committees."—(The Lord Privy Seal [*Lord Tweedmouth*].)

Motion agreed to.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) (BIRMINGHAM CANAL) BILL.—(No. 198.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said, he had some Amendments to which he hoped the noble Lord in charge of the Bill would agree, as he thought it unlikely that either in that House, or in another place any opposition would be offered to them. They were really to supply omissions *per incuriam* in the previous stages of the Bill.

Lord MONKSWELL said, he would deal with the Amendments on the Report stage if the noble Lord would withdraw them for the present.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said, he would move them again on the Report stage.

On Motion, "That the Report be now received," Lord Balfour of Burleigh moved, in Clause 18, page 7, line 15, after ("nothing in") insert ("the foregoing part of").

Line 16, after Sub-section (*d*) insert—

"(*e*.) In calculating the distance for all purposes of tolls and charges in respect of cannel, tap mill forge and coal cinders, coal, coke, culm, and slack, the distance on the Churchbridge branch of the canal shall be taken as equal to one mile and a quarter."

Motion agreed to.

Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) (BRIDGWATER, &c. CANALS) BILL.—(No. 185.)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3^a (according to Order).

The Marquess of HUNTLY moved, in page 5, line 10, after ("or") insert—

("except in the case of the canals of the Shropshire Union Railways and Canal Company.")

Page 19, line 34, insert ("3d.") in the 7th column.

Insert ("3d.") in the 8th column.

Insert ("1d.") in the 9th column.

Insert ("1d.") in the 10th column.

Amendments agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

CROWN LANDS BILL.—(No. 199.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

***Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH**: As the Lord President had stated yesterday his willingness to answer questions, I should like to ask what is the object of Clause 5 of the Bill which repeals provisions in former Acts authorising grants of lands for churches and chapels on certain conditions? As he had not given notice he would postpone it if desired.

The Earl of ROSEBERY suggested that the noble Lord should put down his Amendment for Third Reading. Though prepared yesterday, he was not enabled to answer questions on this occasion.

Bill reported without amendment.

Standing Committee negatived, and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

TENANTS ARBITRATION (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 203.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order of the Day for resuming the Debate on the Amendment to the Motion for the Second Reading read. Debate resumed accordingly.

The Duke of DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I do not know that I can ever recollect a time when a measure of such great importance as the one now before the House has been brought forward by those responsible for it with so little attempt either to establish a case for the measure or to justify, or even to explain, the principles on which it is founded. My noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, in moving the Second Reading yesterday, did little but explain the provisions of the Bill. He made some estimate of the extent and number of the cases to which, in the opinion of the Government, the proposals would apply. He also made some estimate of the sufficiency of the funds provided by the Bill. But the case which he laid before this House for the introduction of this measure appeared to me simply to consist of this: My noble Friend said that the question of Irish land and the Irish land system was a very peculiar one; that it was necessary for us to remove from our minds all notions founded on English and Scotch practice; and that it had been found necessary on several occasions to deal with the question of land in Ireland in an exceptional manner by means of both permanent and temporary measures. My noble Friend said that another difficulty had arisen; and he appeared to think that it was the obvious, simple, and natural conclusion that that difficulty should again be met in the same manner by a temporary measure founded upon exceptional principles. He appeared to think that when there had been so many of them it did not make a great deal of difference whether there were one or two other exceptional measures more or less. But as to the magnitude of the evil to be dealt with, or as to the fitness and appropriate character of the remedy to be applied, my noble Friend said very little. He did inform the House that this Bill would apply to 4,000 tenants, and he said that in his opinion those tenants had a grievance. I fully admit—and I think every Member of this House admits—that those tenants are almost universally subjects of pity and compassion, and that some of them are subjects of sympathy. But I do not know exactly what is the actual grievance under which my noble Friend thinks that these tenants suffer. He said that some of them were evicted before the passing of the Act of 1881, and others before the passing of the Act of 1887. My noble Friend did not take the trouble to tell the House what is the relative number of those persons to whom this Bill would apply, whose tenancies were determined before the Act of 1881. And the Commission which the Government appointed do not appear to have investigated that question either. Neither did they enter into an investigation about the importance and the relative number of those persons whose cases might not be dealt with under the Arrears Act of 1882. When my noble Friend tells the House in a sweeping manner that in his opinion all those tenants have a grievance, we are entitled to ask him what view he takes of by far the largest number of cases which would be dealt with under this Bill. What is his view of the grievance under which the Plan of Campaign evicted tenants suffer? What is the exact nature of their grievance against their landlords who have had the courage to act upon the rights which exceptional legislation of this class may have conferred upon them, or is their grievance mainly and principally against those whose advice, in an evil hour, they decided to follow? If my noble Friend thinks that that is a matter for a grievance I would ask him whether, in his opinion, that is a just grievance? It seems to me it is necessary, in considering this Bill, that we should give more attention than we are invited to do by my noble Friend to the principles on which this Bill is founded. It is not a question merely of the amount of benefit which may be conferred on some persons, or, the amount of injustice which may be inflicted upon others. It is not only a question of healing sores and of making the government of Ireland more easy, or, on the other hand, raising fresh difficulties for the government of Ireland. It is a question of the use which hereafter, perhaps at no distant date, may be made of the principles contained in this Bill. We have recently had an example of the use which may be made of principles to which you may give your assent by reading this Bill a second time. Mr. Morley, on some occasion—I think in introducing the Bill—said that there was not a principle contained in this measure for which some precedent could not be found in the land legislation for Ireland, and that condition, broadly put forward by Mr. Morley, has been made use of by other advocates of the Bill. The free sale provisions of the Act of 1881 have been brought forward by my noble Friend (the Lord Privy Seal) as a precedent for imposing on the landlord the tenancy of persons to whom he objects. But the free sale provisions of the Act of 1881 simply enabled the transfer of an existing tenancy to take place, and in the case of that transfer no doubt it was provided that the Land Commission could judge whether the landlord acted in a reasonable spirit or not. But that precedent is now to be turned into giving power to force upon the landlord a tenant who has no present connection with the tenancy—who is not, indeed, an absolute stranger, but who is, in the point of view of the landlord, a tenant a great deal worse than an absolute stranger, for of him he knows that either through inability or ill-will he has been unable or has refused to comply with the statutory conditions of his tenancy. The Arrears Act of 1882 has been brought forward as a precedent, but the Act of 1882 contained no provision for the compulsory reinstatement of the tenant, except such tenants as might be conceived to have a legal interest in their holdings, who were still in occupation of the holding, or who had not forfeited their right to redemption. The Rent Redemption Act of 1879 and the Land Purchase Act of 1891 have been, over and over again, cited as the germ of this Bill, but that provision was of a voluntary and a non-compulsory character. It was not a provision for the reinstatement of the tenant at all. It is a provision to enable the tenant to return to his holding on terms. The 13th clause of the Act, as has often been pointed out, was intended to get rid of a difficulty which lay in the way of a tenant and a landlord who were willing to come to an agreement—to get rid of the necessity of a physical reinstatement as a preliminary to purchase by a tenant who had left his holding. When precedents like these are quoted in support of a proposal to put back on the owner of the soil a tenant who has defied him, who has forfeited by his own act the protection conferred on him by a long series of Acts framed for his benefit; when it is proposed to make these precedents for putting back such a tenant in a better position than those who have not forfeited their tenancy, we must be careful how we accept this measure or assent to such principles. What are the principles in this Bill? I will refer to three or four principles which are found within the four corners of the Bill—principles which, as I have said, may be held to be precedents for future legislation. This Bill contains the principle that the payment of rent, even of a judicial rent, is not a necessary incident of an Irish tenancy. That, I think, is a proposition which cannot be denied. It is not denied that this Bill will apply to a tenant who has failed to comply with the conditions of his tenancy; and in a great many cases they have failed to comply with those conditions. Another principle which I find in the Bill is that it is to be decreed by a Court of Law that a tenancy which has ceased and determined by the failure of the tenant to comply with one or other of the statutory conditions of the tenancy is not binding. The tenant has a moral, which may be converted into a legal, right to reinstatement, whatever may be the cause which led to the determination of his tenancy. Another principle which is contained in this Bill is that by no lapse of time can a landlord acquire the right to the occupancy of his own land so long as there is in existence a tenant or the representative of a tenant who had been at one time in the occupation of the holding. Another principle is, that the landlord, no matter what amount of capital and labour which he may have expended on his holding—that his right is an inferior one to the right of the prior tenant, who may have no direct connection with the tenancy at all.

Another principle is that the former tenant who has failed to comply with the conditions of his tenancy has a better *primâ facia* right to the occupation of the tenancy than the present tenant who has complied with all the statutory conditions of his tenancy. These are a few of the principles contained in the Bill—principles which from experience we know will form the foundation for future demands, and before we pass this Bill we should require a very strong and urgent case for the necessity of such a measure. There is something in this Bill which I must describe as characteristic. Attention has already been called to the extraordinary vagueness of the language and the extraordinary amount of discretion and responsibility which is conferred on the Arbitrators under this Bill in the exercise of the functions intrusted to them. That vagueness is not denied by the authors of the Bill. My noble Friend (Lord Spencer) last night referred to it, and he was positively enamoured with the vagueness and the wideness of its terms. He found in that vagueness and the undefined character of the instructions to the Arbitrators the chief beauty and merit of this measure. He quoted cases in which the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary had lately successfully dealt with disputes between employers and labourers; but I think my noble Friend somewhat overlooks the wide and essential distinctions between arbitration and conciliation. The Prime Minister had not and never assumed to have the power of compelling the colliery owners to pay a certain rate of wages, nor did he assume to tell the workmen what wages they should accept. All that my noble Friend set himself to do was to bring the two parties together, and to see whether a way might be found by which, with their mutual assent, they could settle their differences. I do not recollect whether the arbitration which was undertaken by the Home Secretary in the case of the cab-strike proceeded at all on different lines; but if the Home Secretary had power or undertook to settle absolutely the rates which should in future be paid for the hire of cabs, it could only be done by the voluntary submission of each of the parties. I believe you will find no precedent in the legislation of this Parliament, whether Irish or other, in which, as between non-assenting parties, such responsibility and wide discretion has been committed to any judicial persons, not even the highest Judges of the land. It might be said that there is such a thing as equitable jurisdiction, but even Judges in equity, administering questions affecting rights, act on a long series of precedents and Judgments, which form as complete a code, though possibly a more elastic one, than that contained in the Statute Book in express words. But where in this case are the precedents which are to guide the persons on whom you confer this enormous jurdisdiction? What are the precedents which are to guide the Arbitrators in deciding whether the conduct of the tenants was reasonable or unreasonable in accepting the advice of Mr. Dillon or Mr. O'Brien in demanding a reduction of 20, 30, or 40 per cent. on their rents? What precedents are to guide them in saying whether the landlord was reasonable or unreasonable in refusing to make such reductions? Or if they find, as probably they would be likely to do in a great many cases, both that the tenants have been unreasonable in demanding too much, and that the landlord may have been unreasonable in conceding too little, and that there was nothing but a balance of unreasonableness on both sides—in such a case as that what is the decision they are to arrive at; what are the scales in which they are to weigh the balance of reasonableness and unreasonableness on the side of one party or the other? I say there is no precedent for enabling any body of men to set aside, for the benefit of one party, the rights which another possesses under the law; to confer upon the other party rights which no law has ever conferred upon them. I say again, when we know, as we do know, that this precedent may, and probably will be used for still further legislation, we are bound to hesitate before we give our consent to a measure which, in my opinion, shakes to its very foundation every right, not only of property, but of every other character which depends on submission to the law and upon the Statute Book. Where is the justification—where is the urgent necessity—for this measure? I believe the following figures, obtained from the Report of the Mathew Commission, are substantially accurate and are accepted by my noble Friend. The claims which came before the Mathew Commission were—from 17 estates into which they specially inquired, 1,403; from all other estates, 2,755. I am informed that it appears from one of the Appendices that the 2,755 claims represent less than 2 per cent. of claims from each of these estates — cases which always will appear in every country from improvident or thriftless tenants being unable to pay their rents and being obliged to abandon their holdings. The urgency of the case, therefore, depends almost entirely on the Plan of Campaign estates. The Mathew Commission found that on the 17 selected estates the 1,403 tenants represented 1,350 holdings, and of these 409 had been either re-let or purchased by the old tenants. Since the Commission reported a Parliamentary Paper had been issued, on July 26 of the present year, which shows that since the inquiry in 1892 there have been 25 new evictions on these 17 estates; and, on the other hand, there have been 128 additional reinstatements. Thus it appears that in two years 14 per cent of reinstatements by purchase or otherwise are going on even on the Plan of Campaign estates. My Lords, it is absolutely certain that this process would have been more rapid, and would now become more rapid, if the evicted tenants on these estates had not been buoyed up by the hope of some exceptional and unjust legislation such as this. It was admitted, I believe, in the discussions in the other House by some of the advocates of the Bill that a voluntary measure would admit nine-tenths of the cases which have to be dealt with. Under these circumstances, I ask what justification is there for bringing forward a compulsory measure founded on the principles to which I have referred? My noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty says that compulsion is only contained in the first clause. I will ask in a moment whether that is quite an accurate statement of the case; but, assuming its accuracy for the present, upon what principle is that compulsion to be applied to the landlords? You talk of the necessity of compelling the landlord—a necessity which may exist—to bring back a tenant whom he does not like. It is not merely the case of bringing back a tenant whom the landlord does not like; it is a case of bringing back a tenant who was unable or else refused to pay his rent, and who probably may be unable or may refuse again to pay his rent. This compulsory provision in the first clause fully justifies the assertion of the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyll) that this measure absolutely destroys and abrogates the Act of 1881. Was it or was it not enacted by the Act of 1881 that certain conditions should be attached to the tenancy in return for the privileges conferred upon the tenant? Was it or was it not the case that the payment of certain rent agreed upon or judicially fixed was one of the conditions? When you are creating an irresponsible body, and empowering that body to decide that such breach of the statutory conditions of the Act of 1881 is not to have the consequences which were provided by the Act, I say you are breaking up and repealing that Act just as much as if you conferred upon the same person or some other person the power of depriving any body of tenants arbitrarily selected of the privileges conferred upon them by the Act, such as free sale, fixity of tenure, and the power of obtaining a fair rent. So far as the landlord is concerned, every privilege conferred upon him or left to him by the Act of 1881, and the subsequent Acts is swept away without compensation and without redress. In 1881 Parliament promised the Irish landlord that, in return for the concessions which he was called upon to make, in return for the reduction which he might be called upon to make in his rent, he should enjoy additional security for the rent which remained. Parliament, by the Act of 1881, referred the Irish landlord for that security to the recognised Courts of Law. This Bill is going to supersede the recognised Courts of Law by a tribunal which is not a Court of Law and does not assume to be a Court of Law, but from whose decision there is no appeal. The injustice which may be done to the landlord under this section is of a double character. It may inflict direct loss; it certainly will inflict indirect loss upon him. My noble Friend, Lord Lansdowne, who spoke last night, did not like to bring forward his own case. But I believe it is well-known that he is in occupation of an evicted farm on his estate, and has spent thousands of pounds in stocking and improving it. Under this Bill the former tenant may be forced back into occupation, and whatever else that tenant may be, he will be absolutely incapable of taking over the stock or of compensating my noble Friend for his improvements. Grievous is the injury which may be inflicted on the landlord under this provision directly; but the indirect injury is still greater. What inducement in future will any tenant have to pay the rent which has been agreed upon or which has been judicially fixed? He knows that the failure to pay that rent is not a necessary condition or incident of his holding. He knows that the decree of the Court of Law to the effect that his tenancy is determined is not a final decree; and every inducement which existed before will be, if not absolutely destroyed, enormously weakened by the operation of this Bill. I should like to say a word or two with regard to the third clause. I admit that it is provided in that clause that the objection of the new tenant to make way for the old tenant is a bar to further proceedings. Therefore, perhaps it does not contain direct compulsion, but is there no indirect compulsion under the third clause. In the first place, you will enormously weaken the position of the new tenant. You will deprive him of the support of his landlord which he now possesses. The procedure under the clause is between the former tenant, the new tenant, and the Arbitrators; and the landlord is expressly excluded from all part in the proceedings. As matters stand now, the new tenant has the protection that if he can be coerced or induced to quit his holding that may not be followed by the reinstatement of the old tenant without the consent of the landlord, and the inducement to put pressure and coercion on the new tenant is therefore proportionately reduced. But under this Bill you will deprive the new tenant of that protection which his landlord is now able to give him. The new tenant has already in all probability had to withstand strong pressure—the pressure of public opinion, as it is called. He, perhaps, has undergone something more than pressure. He may have had to undergo persecution, and yet he has resisted and remains in possession. In addition to the pressure of an irresponsible body such as the National League, to which he has hitherto been subjected, you are going now to put upon him the pressure of an authorised legal tribunal. He will be served with notice that the former tenant has applied to be reinstated in his holding; and he will be told that, in the event of his consenting to give up possession, there will be some compensation for him. Will it not be far more difficult for a new tenant under these circumstances to resist the additional pressure which must be placed upon him than it has been in the past? It is very difficult to understand the effects of these provisions if you do not go a little beyond chaos of technical terms of the Bill. A person described in this Bill as a new tenant is known in Ireland as a land-grabber, and the way in which this Bill will be read will be to read in the word "land-grabber" wherever you find the words "new tenant." Thus—

> "Where the holding referred to in the petition is, in the opinion of the Arbitrator, in the occupation, not of the landlord, but of the land-grabber,"

—and then the land-grabber is described—

> "all the foregoing provisions of this Act shall apply."

But if "land-grabber" objects, the Arbitrator shall not make an order for reinstatement. By what right do you call upon the land-grabber to object? What is he called upon to object to? He is called upon to object to being ejected from a holding of which he is as rightfully and as legally in possession as my noble Friend who brought in this Bill is in possession of his estates. In forcing the new tenant to make objection you are placing upon him an obligation which you have no right to impose. If he does make the objection, he can only sustain it at the cost of renewed pressure and persecution. If this clause contains no element of direct compulsion, it contains all the elements of indirect compulsion, which may be far more difficult to meet than even the severest form of direct compulsion. Mr. Morley has taken credit for having, in spite of the pressure put upon him, refused to turn out the new tenant without his own consent; but it seems to me that it is nothing but an invitation to put the pressure of public opinion, as it is called, or, if public opinion will not serve, the pressure of boycotting, and all the rest of the machinery upon this unhappy man. That is very well understood, and it is not denied by the Irish

Members. Mr. O'Brien, in the last Debate on the measure, in the other House, said no one doubted that in one way or another the land-grabbers must be induced to give up the holdings they have taken, and unless this Bill contains, in their opinion, the means of inducing them to do this, it would not effect its purpose, and they would not give a "Thank you!" for it. Therefore, not even the removal of compulsion from the landlord would abolish the objections which we entertain to it so long as it contains the inducements to do by illegal pressure and other means that which the Government shrinks from doing by direct legal enactment. The Bill has been spoken of as one of amnesty. It cannot be a measure of amnesty when, by the confession of the Irish Members themselves, the war is not over. The land war in Ireland has always been, and still is, as much a war, perhaps more a war, between the old tenants and the new tenants as between the tenants and the landlords, and the very moment when you are talking of passing a measure of amnesty it is proclaimed by one of the leaders of the Irish tenantry that there will be no peace in Ireland until the land-grabber, by some means or another, is induced to quit his holding. This is not a measure of amnesty; it is a measure which is framed and intended to give victory to one side, and that the defeated side. It is not a measure of amnesty, because it will tend rather to revive the embers of a war which have been dying out than to extinguish them. Then there is the point as to the unnecessary extension of this Bill to cases which are not connected with eviction at all. The term used in the Bill, "determination of the tenancy," is a term which will apply not only to cases of eviction, but to cases where the tenant has voluntarily left his holding, perhaps owing many years' rent, or cases where the tenant has received compensation for giving up his holding, and is now dissatisfied with his bargain. I do not think that any explanation has been given why it should be necessary to deal with cases which are not in any sense connected with eviction. Then there is, in the second clause, the provision forcing on the landlord the acceptance of a tenant who would not have been admitted by the Land Commission. But I will not now deal further with the provisions of the Bill. No one has ever been of opinion that this measure could be accepted by this House in its present form. But suggestions have been made—and something like a suggestion was made last night by the First Lord of the Admiralty—that we might pass the Second Reading of the Bill and amend it in Committee. Your Lordships have not received much encouragement from the Government to amend measures in Committee. An instance of that was supplied in the case of the Employers' Liability Bill, where the Amendment was certainly not one which touched the principle of the measure. Nevertheless, it was considered sufficient to justify the Government in abandoning that Bill. My noble Friend asks for a pledge that if the measure be made a voluntary one it would be accepted by the landlords of Ireland. It is impossible for anyone to give a pledge which should bind the whole body of Irish landlords. Mr. Morley, in the other House, was asked to give a similar pledge on the part of the Irish tenants, and he said it was impossible. It is as impossible for any man in this House to give a pledge that will bind the whole of the landlords, as it is for any person in the other House to give a pledge that will bind the whole of the tenants. I did not hear, but I read, and I repeat the offer made by my noble Friend Lord Lansdowne—let the Government show us what Amendments they are prepared to propose themselves, or will accept from us, which would turn the Bill into a voluntary measure which we could accept. I do not believe it can be done. The principle of this Bill is compulsion, and nothing else. It is a Bill drawn throughout on lines leading to compulsion. Every stage of the procedure shows it—from the *primâ facie* case to the absolute Order itself. The nearest approach we have to a suggestion for a compromise is one contained in the last speech made by Mr. Morley, in the other House, when, in answer to Mr. Kenny, he said that the suggestion that before the Provisional Order of the Arbitrators was made absolute—that was, just before the blow fell—the consent of the landlord should be an indispensable condition, that that raised a point which was worthy of consideration. Look at the position of the landlord, according to Mr. Morley. After all the proceedings have been gone through, and just before the blow falls, the landlord may possibly be invested with power to put himself in evidence. Is that a position in which we have a right to place any man who is doing nothing but defending the just rights which your own law has given him? I ask, again, how is it possible to amend a Bill of this kind in this House? We are often reminded that we have not here any Representatives of the Irish tenantry, and I doubt very much whether the Irish Members would be willing to place their case absolutely in the hands of the Members of Her Majesty's Government who sit in this House. If any compromise is to be effected with regard to turning this Bill into a voluntary Bill, it must be done by agreement, and with full and frank acceptance on the part of the Representatives of both landlords and tenants. Her Majesty's Government destroyed all chance of compromise when, in the other House, without any provocation and after only two days' discussion in Committee, they imposed the gag on further consideration. They imposed the gag, not only upon their opponents, but also on their own supporters, and thus, in the only place where agreement—if agreement was possible—could be arrived at, they stifled discussion, and so destroyed the last chance of this measure being put in a shape in which it would have been possible for this House to accept it. There is no use in deceiving ourselves, and if we do we certainly shall not deceive anybody else. It is better to look this matter fairly and fully in the face, and see whether there really is any possible ground of agreement. All parties are agreed on this—that there is a strong desire that this difficulty should be settled. But what possible ground has been suggested by Her Majesty's Government upon which a settlement which would remove this sore could be arrived at? What provisions of their measure are they prepared to abandon or what Amendments can they suggest to remove those objections of gravity and importance to which I have referred? Is it possible that any Amendment that the Government could possibly accept, and which did not contain the principle of compulsion, could be moved on the Third Reading, after this Bill has passed through Committee? The principle of this Bill is compulsion exercised by miscalled Arbitrators. We say that there is nothing to arbitrate about. Arbitration is a process for deciding upon disputed rights; but there is no dispute as to the legal rights here. The rights are all on one side, and there are none on the other. Probably it would be wise and expedient that one of the parties should, in the interests of peace and order, waive and give up some portion of those undoubted rights; but that is a course not for arbitrators to decide upon, but for conciliators to suggest. As long as your Bill rests upon the principle of compulsion to be exercised by so-called arbitrators I do not see what possibility of agreement or amendment exists. If the Government had been content to follow the real precedent which received the sanction of Parliament and the support of both sides of the House of Commons, I do not think there would have been much difficulty to contend against. Over and over again it has been suggested to the Government that if they would be satisfied with a measure re-enacting the 13th clause of the Land Purchase Act of 1891, without imposing any limit of time—the limit having in the opinion of some prevented the successful operation of that clause—it would not meet with opposition, but with cordial assent. It has been said that the operation of the 13th clause of the Act of 1891 was altogether a failure; but that is not correct, for it had some effect. However, if it were tried again, it would be tried in very different circumstances. Both Parties have now the experience of two years' long and bitter struggle, and by the confession of both Parties they are sick and weary of it. Because an enactment failed two years ago, it does not follow that a measure which would give the Parties another opportunity to meet together and to arrive at an amicable settlement would necessarily fail now. Reinstatement by purchase is, in the opinion of almost all who have considered the question, a solution far preferable to that of reinstatement in any other way. Reinstatement by purchase, when it can be effected, is a final and complete settlement, and leaves no ground for friction or dispute between the parties who have been so long opposed to each other. But if you could not be contented with that, you might have added to a Bill founded upon this principle some provision for the appointment of conciliators, men not armed with any compulsory powers, but having the right to invite all parties—landlords, old tenants, and new tenants—to meet together in order to see whether a settlement of their differences could be arrived at. You might have entrusted to these men the disposal of the funds provided by this Bill. If you were satisfied to try such an experiment as this, I believe that even now a measure embodying it might pass through both Houses of Parliament in a week. If there were any real desire to attempt a solution of this question upon purely voluntary and permissive lines, it would be far simpler and more rational to start with a clean sheet, and to introduce a new measure, than to endeavour to engraft upon the principle of this compulsory Bill provisions which are essentially at variance with it. We know the difficulties in which the Government are placed, partly in consequence of the conduct of some of their allies, and partly in consequence of the conduct of some of their own Members when they were in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility. Well, the Unionist Party would willingly have met the Government half-way if the latter had been willing to accept any basis upon which a real agreement could be arrived at. This measure, however, will do much more to disturb Ireland than to settle the difficulties there. Believing that it contains principles which are fatal to the foundations of law and order and to peace and prosperity in Ireland, and indirectly also to peace and prosperity in the rest of the United Kingdom, I say on my own behalf and on behalf of those with whom I am politically connected, that it is impossible for us to give our assent to the Second Reading of this Bill.

*LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, very few even of the strongest supporters of this measure can have listened to the speech of the noble Duke without serious searchings of heart and without feeling great anxiety to reconsider the question as to whether they have not given their support to a Bill full of mischief and peril. This Bill has been presented to your Lordships as one of great urgency in regard to a social and administrative difficulty in Ireland. But that contention cannot be maintained in face of the facts and figures bearing on the matter. Surely, my Lords, the acts of the Government itself are entirely opposed to any such notion. If the question was urgent, if it was one of acute emergency, what was the justification of the Government for waiting two years before they brought in the Bill, and for only having brought it in at the fag-end of the Session, and then not voluntarily at all, but because they were coerced by the pressure of their political supporters from Ireland? Why was it not introduced in the voluntary shape which the noble Duke has pointed out, which, in the opinion of all reasonable people, would have settled at least nine-tenths of the cases likely to arise under this Bill. It is unnecessary to go again through the figures given with so much clearness and significance by the noble Duke. Those figures demonstrate the hollowness of the claim to urgency. Since May, 1879, there have been about 35,000 evictions. Mr. Morley calculates that less than 4,000 would apply under this Bill—and this includes the Plan of Campaign tenants. The real fact that has caused the introduction of this Bill is the existence of 860 evicted tenants representing the Plan of Campaign, who are now supported by other people. That is a grave and significant fact. But what proportion does this figure of 860 bear to the total number of tenants in Ireland? A fraction less than 1 per cent. There are 2,700 tenants included in Mr. Morley's 4,000 over and above the Plan of Campaign tenants, and they are to be found not in plague spots of which Lord Spencer spoke, but scattered over 1,639 estates in Ireland. There have been less than two evictions in 15 years on each of these 1,639 estates. On 1,200 out of these 1,639 estates there has not been more than one on each during the 15 years. What, then, becomes of the administrative urgency and emergency which the noble Earl had to make out in order to prove the justification for this Bill? Why, England, Scotland, and Wales will show a much larger figure of evictions than those 1,200 estates that are to be made the prey of this Bill. It is said that we should send a message of peace to Ireland. Yes, but send it at your own expense, and not at the expense of others without proving that you have a right to regard them and to treat them as outlaws. It is all very well to speak about a message of peace, about amnesty, and letting bygones be bygones, but do not let these things be all on one side.

You appeal to the landlords to be generous, considerate, and to send a message of peace; but where is the amnesty for the landlords? Take the case of the new tenants, and then consider your phrase about a message of peace, a truce, and the bringing of parties together. Where has there been a whisper on the part of those who are entitled to speak for the evicted tenants of a suggestion that if 99 per cent. are to be restored to farms now held by new tenants, that that will save the peace and quiet of the one man who may remain in possession? This is not a Bill of conciliation; it is really a Bill of coercion. It is a Bill to try to pay off political scores. The farmers of Ireland, not for the first time, have been made the catspaw of agitators; and if this Bill, in payment of political scores, framed as it is, should pass into law, never again could any land combination or agitation be resisted in Ireland by the landlords or anyone else. I am an Irishman myself, and I am not incapable of realising the wishes and the feelings of even those to whom I am opposed. I do not object to a feeling of sympathy, and I desire conciliation. I have never taken up an attitude of *non possumus* about any reasonable measure, and having it dealt with in any reasonable way; but this is not a reasonable measure. The main argument of the Government is that if they make any proposal to Parliament, and if they only call it "a message of peace," that we are to shut our eyes to all the injustices it may contain, and pass it without a murmur. My Lords, this Bill has been deliberately framed on impossible lines, and without any analogy to any Statute that has ever been passed in this House or in the Parliament of any other civilised country. No process of evolution can get from the germs that are to be found in any earlier Act of Parliament even a hint of the developments contained in this Bill. There has been talk about the Arrears Act and Section 13 of the Act of 1891. I will not discuss them; the analogies are not arguable. I venture to say absolutely that this Bill is without a precedent in the past, although it will make a precedent fraught with most deadly peril for the future. The Bill has been framed to embody the principle of compulsion, and the voluntary principle has been deliberately set aside. It is the Government who say throughout "*Non possumus*"; they repudiate the voluntary principle. As it has been framed the Bill is founded on force, on compulsion, and on coercion, which are against every principle of law, every dictate of equity, and to use the word "justice" in connection with it is absolutely absurd. We are asked to affirm these principles by giving the Bill a Second Reading. But, sorry though I am to have to do it—for I would have preferred a different Bill—I will oppose the Second Reading, because I believe the Bill to be unjust, perilous, and impossible. What is an evicted tenant? He is a man who owes at least one year's rent, and who far more often in Ireland owes two, three, four, or five years' rent, and is then evicted by his landlord. Like every man, the landlord has his family to maintain and his obligations to meet; and if he cannot get his rent, he has a right at all events to his land. It is not suggested that this social and administrative difficulty has been brought about by harsh or unjust landlords; it is not suggested that this Bill is to be confined to harsh and unjust evictions. I heard with regret a statement made by Lord Spencer yesterday when he said, "I am not one of those who condemn the whole body of Irish landlords." What did he mean? Nobody knows the landlords of Ireland better than the noble Earl, and yet, in effect, he says, with a most magnificent appearance of generosity—

> "I will not condemn the whole body of them, because there are some that are not so bad."

I denounce this as a statement which ought never to have been made in this House. Mr. Gladstone, when bringing in the Land Act of 1881, which followed the Bessborough Commission, on which it was founded, said that the landlords of Ireland had been tried, and in the main they had been acquitted; and in face of that statement it was monstrous for a Minister who had been twice Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to utter out of his generosity the statement that he would not condemn, forsooth! the whole body of landlords in Ireland. I suppose you do not wish to make the landlords of Ireland outlaws? I suppose you consider that this Bill is founded on justice, though you have had the modesty not to say it? At all events, if any noble Lords can satisfy their consciences that this is a Bill founded on justice, let them remember the noble words of Mr. Gladstone, who, in describing what justice was, said, "When I say justice, I mean justice to all." Those words should not be forgotten even in the case of the landlords of Ireland. What are the Land Laws of Ireland? Are they harsh and unjust? The landlords are not above the law; they have to live under it and to obey it; and they can only administer it. Is the law they administer harsh and unjust? I assert, not for the first time with reference to these questions, that the Land Laws of Ireland are the most generous, the most considerate, the most widely liberal to tenants that can be found in the whole habitable globe. Can anyone question that? If you do, you cannot know what the Land Laws are, because I assert that not in democratic America, not in Republican France, not in free England are laws so generous and considerate to tenants as are to be found in Ireland. For 25 years law after law has been passed in favour of the tenants and against the landlords. You have got the Statute of 1870, which provided compensation for improvements and disturbance; you have the Act of 1881, enabling tenants for the asking to get an independent authority to measure their rents; you have got the Act of 1887, which enables the tenant about to be evicted to ask for a stay of execution, and to be permitted to pay by instalments. I ask you who know English laws—Have you anything like these considerate measures in England, or have you heard of anything like them in any other country? When all their rights have been interfered with, there is one supreme right left to the landlords of Ireland which enables them to enjoy any fair play at all. In the supreme resort they have left the right of eviction, jealously guarded round, and enabling the tenant to be protected at every step of the process; and it is only after the landlord has satisfied every claim of the Court that he is entitled to evict. This guarded right of eviction, left by the Irish Code, is now to be done away with by summoning into existence a mushroom, a fungus tribunal, which will have the power of sweeping away the decrees of Courts in the highest matters. These are matters worthy of grave consideration before you coerce the Irish landlords to act as this Bill directs. Whenever a landlord has been driven to evict under the law, in order to enable himself and his family to live, is it not indefensible to coerce him, against his will, and without compensation, to undo what the law with all these safeguards has permitted him to do? It would be a farce, if it were not a tragedy, to reflect on the position in which you put the landlord. My Lords, the evicted tenants belong to two great classes: those who would pay and could not, and those who could pay and would not. I give my sympathy at once to all, and particularly to the first class. But does one of your Lordships think that it is commiseration for the men who would pay and could not which has caused this Bill to be brought in? I do not believe there is a man in this House who would suggest that this Bill would have been brought in if it had not been for the class of tenants who could pay and would not. There are many categories of evicted tenants to be spoken of without harshness and with great sympathy. To the honest but insolvent tenants, to the wretched dupes of the Plan of Campaign who yielded either to intimidation or through cowardice, he would be a hard-hearted man who denied sympathy. But there is another class—the active supporters and ringleaders of the Plan of Campaign, the boycotters who have done everything to resist eviction, to prevent farms from being taken, and to make the landlord's life a burden. I do not say that human feeling may not be given even to them, or that now, in their wretchedness, they are not entitled to consideration. But we know that it is just this last class of ringleaders, agitators, and cordial supporters of the Plan of Campaign who are the moving spirits of this Bill, and not the poor and deserving classes of tenants. I do not say put them outside the pale of consideration. Let their landlord, if he pleases, no matter what their errors may have been, enter into negotiations with them. But do not coerce him. Leave him to do what he thinks fair. Is it not a strong measure to give exceptional rewards, not to the best, but to the worst tenants? And surely it is a cruel injustice to compel the landlord to receive back without any compensation those who for years made his life a burden and kept his farms vacant. What would be the relation of the parties under such a blessed message of peace? What would be the demeanour of the tenant who got back in spite of his landlord? What sort of a "time-of-day" would he give the landlord when he met him on the roadside? My Lords, the topic of the new tenants has been dealt with so fully and with such power by the noble Duke who preceded me that I do not feel justified in saying more about it. The new tenants are put in a painful and shabby position. They are in possession of property just as much theirs as any of your Lordships' property is yours, and it is unfair that they should be asked to give it up. This question, my Lords, is very serious—it may involve terrible consequences to life and limb. Then there is this strange, this curious, this startling tribunal. I decline to discuss those gentlemen who have consented to act under the Bill; but it is ludicrous to call them Arbitrators. Arbitrators are people of whom each side has had the power of exercising some choice, and in whom each side has confidence. But these men are selected by a Government which has shown itself to be throughout the political opponent of the landlords. It is idle to expect that when you baptise them Arbitrators you get over all the suspicion which must attach to their works. They might be called a triumvirate, except that one generally associates that name with proscription lists. I will call them undertakers or dispensers, or anything but Arbitrators. The most odious occurrences in English history have been the efforts of Sovereigns to arrogate to themselves the power of dispensing with our laws. No Minister would ever dare to do it. But what the Government have not dared to do directly they seek to do indirectly by the dispensers whom by this Bill they appoint for two years to dispense with every law. The noble Earl who introduced this Bill curiously omitted to mention a single one of the difficulties which have been discussed for many days past elsewhere. I have to state one not previously noted. Anyone would think, from reading the Bill and listening to the speech of the noble Earl, that this triumvirate were to have the power, acting together, of administering justice or injustice. It is curious, too, that the name of Mr. White is commonly put forward, being an eminent Queen's Counsel of the Irish Bar, as if he would be always present. But it has not yet been stated by any supporter of the Bill that it is not at all necessary that these three men should act together, and that each one of them has the power of doing everything in this Bill by himself and unaided. Is it not startling that it should be reserved for the second day of the Debate to state a fact which is of the greatest importance? Surely even a Member of the Government would shrink from trusting whichever they think the least capable of these men to make orders by himself against the landlords of Ireland, it may be, for their ruin and against the new tenants, it may be, to the danger of their lives. That is a very serious matter, and, I venture to think, is absolutely indefensible. As to the *primâ facie* case, I would ask Lord Chancellor two plain questions. The triumvirate are to be satisfied that there is a *primâ facie* case for reinstatement, "having regard to the circumstances of the district." What is the meaning of that? I will not be put off with the statement that that is left to the Arbitrators. I have a right to know the opinion of the Government as to the meaning of their own words. What is the meaning of "having regard to the circumstances of the district?" Do they mean that if a neighbourhood is quiet and peaceful, with everbody obeying the law, that fact is to influence a decision in favour of a *primâ facie* case? There is another question equally plain. Does it mean that if the district has been disturbed and lawless, if the tenant has gone out with difficulty, if he has lived in a Campaign hut, if the place has been kept in disturbance by constant boycott and outrage, that those are circumstances intended to be in favour of the tenant? Or are they circumstances intended to be in favour of the landlord? Are the circumstances of a district that has been marked by crime and outrage to induce the Arbitrators to say that a *primâ facie* case has been made out? I have asked a very plain question; and I must not be put off by being told that it is for the Arbitrators to decide. The Arbitrators cannot be abler men than the Lord Chancellor sitting here. They have no right to claim clearer opinions on this question than the Government who have put those words into the Bill. My question, then, is plain. What view are they to take of a quiet district or a disturbed district? Then they are to have regard to "the circumstances under which the eviction took place." What is the meaning of that? If a tenant went out quietly, and if he gave no trouble, would that help to make out a *primâ facie* case? If he went out with violence and caused great trouble in the district, would that make out a *primâ facie* case? These are important and even vital questions, and I think I am entitled to have a clear answer. My Lords, these three men are certainly put in a very curious position. They are to decide what is a *primâ facie* case on the petition of the evicted tenant without any communication with the landlord, and without any evidence. I have an infinite respect for my own countrymen. At all events, in Ireland there is a great power of imagination and a very nice literary skill; and if you are to tell the tenants that they have only to make a *primâ facie* case, a common form of statement will be prepared in which circumstances of the district and circumstances of the eviction will be stated which will bring tears to the eyes of the Arbitrators. Then the Arbitrators have to consider whether the conduct of the landlord and tenant has been reasonable or unreasonable. Take the tenant first. What is the meaning of unreasonable conduct on the part of the tenant? Suppose that the tenant has been evicted; that he has had a fair rent fixed at his own motion; that he owes several years' arrears; that he has resisted eviction; that he has helped to keep the neighbourhood in a state of crime and lawlessness, will the Arbitrators at once decide that this conduct was unreasonable and that the man must go about his business? You will remember that men guilty of this conduct were the men most active in keeping up the agitation. Is it expected that the Arbitrators will decide against him, and declare that he has been guilty of unreasonable conduct? If this were a voluntary Bill and the tenant was guilty of unreasonable conduct, I would say nothing against the landlord if he thought proper to condone the tenant's conduct and forgive his errors as a matter of conciliation; but under this Bill you compel the landlord, whether he likes it or not, without compensation, to put back the tenant guilty of such conduct. Then the Arbitrators are to take into account the unreasonable conduct of the landlord. What does that mean? The landlord must be credited with clear legal rights. Then if he has exercised his clear legal rights how can it be said that he has acted unreasonably? My Lords, the truth is that this Bill proceeds on the assumption that there is a justice higher than the justice of the law; and that there is an equity greater than has been recognised by any Court, by any Statute, or by any Parliament. My Lords, this Bill is a grave and serious lesson to the tenants of Ireland. It is a serious teaching for them. We are told to trust the Arbitrators. That is a terrible doctrine. I will not discuss the *personnel* of this body, but it is a terrible thing to ask men to give up the protection of the law and place themselves at the mercy of the untried discretion of these three men. Any system of law is better than the chance or accident by which a despot may do what is fair. Suppose that the landlord has been changed after the eviction — that a new landlord has come in by purchase; that he has given a higher price for the land because there are no tenants on the land. He has been no party to the evictions. He never knew the tenants. What a monstrous thing to force on him tenants of whom he knows nothing, and wants to know nothing! Then, again, take a case in which three men may have occupied the farm and have been evicted successively in the course of the 15 years? How are the Arbitrators to decide which of the three claimants is to get the farm? But what is to become of the farm and the rent in those cases? Bishop Healy, examined before the Mathew Commission, said there was little good in restoring men who had nothing; a large proportion of these men will be insolvent. I could understand your encouraging voluntary settlements, but how are the men to work the farm on this system? How is the rent to be paid? The rent would not be paid. Then the evictions would take place again, and the whole of the neighbourhood would be in a state of turmoil. Again, there would be "a social administrative difficulty," which is a euphemism for making a hell of the neighbourhood. Then another Mr. Morley would bring in another Bill, and he would be able to say truly this time that there is a precedent in the Act which Parliament had been mad enough to pass in 1894. Under this process rent will vanish; there will be no new tenants, and the landlords will all come to grief. My Lords, this is not a purely Irish question. Do not let Englishmen and Scotchmen think that they can do this grievous injustice to the landlords of Ireland without its coming home to them to disturb their own property and their own arrangements. My Lords, the more this Bill is examined the more will it be found to be based on injustice and coercion. A landlord may have been in possession of a farm for five or six years, and may have spent a large sum of money in improvements. The tenant may have surrendered the farm and been compensated, and yet that tenant is to be permitted to be restored against the will of the landlord and without compensation. These are powers absolutely unknown to the law. These Arbitrators will have power to overrule the Lord Chancellor, the High Court, and Mr. Justice Monroe (the Land Judge) in their decisions with regard to land in Ireland. The Arbitrators will want to be very clever indeed to carry out their duties. They will have to decide the most complicated matters that men have ever been asked to decide. But there is another most important point. I heard the noble Earl who introduced the Bill give utterance to a statement; but I have to confess with shame that I did not realise the full significance of that statement until I read it in *The Times* this morning. I could hardly grasp the meaning of the words when I heard them, because the noble Earl has an air of making a statement as if there was no particular monstrosity wrapped up in what he is saying. The noble Earl said that the restored tenants may apply to have a fair rent fixed. The noble Earl is not the first man who has been ruined by his reasons. He gave as his reason that the farm might be then out of condition, and that it would not be reasonable to compel a tenant in such circumstances to pay the same rent as before. What on earth do these words mean? You first compel the landlord, by reason of rent not being paid, to resume possession of the farm; the tenant then, by intimidation and boycotting, prevents the farm being taken, and makes it almost worthless; and then, when the farm is at its worst, you compel the landlord, against his will, to give back the land to the tenant who, by conspiracy with others, has made it worthless; and you give the tenant power to have a fair rent fixed upon the basis of its present worthless condition, and that rent is the rent which the landlord is to get for the next 15 years. The manner of the noble Earl did not disclose the hideous injustice of the proposition he was laying down. The noble Earl illustrated his statement that compulsion was necessary in a curious manner. He said that he was in Ireland when the Westmeath Act—one of the most powerful Coercion Acts ever passed—was in operation; and that he found, even in the most disturbed districts, that settlements were more brought about by the adjustments of the difficulties of landlords and tenants than by the Act. Yes, but did he forget that in those cases the voluntary action of the landlords did it all? My Lords, some reference was made by Lord Tweedmouth last night to the miners' strike, where the parties came together. Do you mean to suggest that this Bill is within 100 miles of that analogy? I would like to know what the mine-owners would say if they were treated to a Bill like this—a Bill placing compulsion on one side and leaving the other side free, and that other side which is free having the appointment of the arbitrators to carry out their behests. I would be pleased to see conciliation carried out by independent men assisted by public money, and I believe in my heart that if there were such an effort of conciliation, worked by an independent body, assisted even to the extent proposed in this Bill by public money, it would practically do everything that is needed to get over what is called the difficulty of the present position. I am happy to think that even without this Bill settlements are going on. No matter what happens to this Bill, settlements will go on; and I was glad to hear a statement yesterday that on the Olphert estate there have been 75 settlements since August last, and further settlements are going on every week. What are the teachings of this Bill? In the first place, it will teach that rent need not longer be paid in Ireland; the payment of rent will become a mere precarious benevolence. Good tenants who have paid their way in bad times will be discouraged; no evicted farm will again be taken, for no new tenant will appear again on the horizon. It will reward a criminal conspiracy who have encouraged resistance to the law. It teaches that tenants have only to break the law boldly enough and long enough to ensure that the law will be changed so as to bring it into harmony with their wishes. In common with many others, I have looked to the development of the purchase system as the true solution of the agrarian question in Ireland; but this Bill strikes a paralysing blow at that system. It makes serious alterations in its provisions; it makes exceptions where there should be uniformity. Once the owner tells the Arbitrators that he wishes to sell he is asked no further questions. He is not at liberty to name his price nor to reject their price; he hands the whole thing over to them to deal with at their absolute discretion. The tenant is the only person who has the right to say, if he does not like the price, the thing is off. Is that fair? Is that the way to encourage confidence in the Purchase Code? But worse than all this remains to be told. This is the first time you propose to fix prices by public officials in the purchase system. That is an appalling change. What a vista of dissatisfaction does it open up! Take the Ponsonby estate. On that estate there have been 100 sales at 17½ years' purchase between landlord and tenant, and, if this Bill passed, about the same number more might be possibly expected to buy. But now the price is to be fixed not by negotiations between landlord and tenant, not even by the Land Commission, but by three men appointed *ad hoc.* I will assume that they fix something under 17½ years' purchase—say 15 years' purchase. What is the position? The 100 tenants who by voluntary action consented to give the 17½ years' purchase will be savagely disappointed, and there will be an immediate agitation for revision of terms. Of the 17 Campaign estates there are seven on which sales under the Purchase Acts have taken place. If this strange new tribunal should now fix prices for the purchases by re-instated tenants on these same seven estates at lower rates, the previous purchasers will have a sense of wrong and grievance. The Government are becoming the largest landowners in Ireland; and supposing there should be any movement against payment of the instalments of the purchase-money, and the Government should be driven to exercise the supreme power of eviction, where under this Bill, if it passes, would they get purchasers—where would they get new tenants? If this Bill passes, the Treasury, who are supposed never to be asleep—I wonder how they let this Bill pass—the Treasury, who represent the interest of the creditor State in this matter, will have allowed a grave invasion of the State's security and have struck a serious blow at the whole land purchase system of Ireland. My Lords, this Bill is not final; it does not purport to provide for all the evicted tenants; the tribunal must refuse many applications, and the Bill does not touch future evictions. The Government have erred with their eyes open. The Bill cannot be defended. The noble Earl spoke in the language of warning about its rejection; but the Bill has not been argued, and it cannot be defended. It has been deliberately framed on impossible lines, and I decline to vote for its Second Reading because I regard it as dangerous in principle, unjust, and not final, mischievous in its details, and opposed to the best interests of the tenants of Ireland.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): Whatever may be said with regard to the want of opportunity in the other House of stating the objections to this measure, I do not think it can be said that there has been any lack of opportunity in this House, or that full advantage has not been taken of the opportunity. My noble and learned Friend who has just spoken complained that this Bill had not been argued, and could not be defended. Of course, if it cannot be defended there is no use of my attempting to defend it. I am quite persuaded of this: that, however well I may establish that the Bill is founded on just and sound principles, it will not shake the confidence of my noble Friend in his statement that it has received no defence at all. Much hard language has been used about the Bill. "Hideous injustice" and other expressions have been used to describe its character. I confess that nowadays I am absolutely indifferent to the use of language of that description. It does not touch me in the slightest degree, and I will tell your Lordships why. I have heard proposals denounced as robbery and confiscation, and within a few months I have seen these proposals embodied in a measure and passed by this House at the instance of the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition. And of this I am confident: that if this Bill in substance were introduced, as, perchance, in the chances of life it is possible it may be, by the noble Marquess in this House, it would be accepted with as little objection as the other measures to which I have referred. We were told before this Bill had reached this House and whilst it was in another place, by a letter written at the instance of the noble Marquess, that its rejection was almost certain to be moved because of the manner in which it had been dealt with by the other House. We have heard some allusions to-night, though not to the same extent as might have been anticipated from that summons to noble Lords, as to the manner in which it was dealt with. Can anyone have listened to this Debate without being certain that if the measure had been discussed, instead of for a week or two, for a month or two in the other House, it would have been rejected with as much contempt as it is going to be to-night? What is the suggestion made? That the Representatives of the people were to be kept in the other House, at the instance of a Party in that House, debating and discussing and wasting time which to many of them is precious and valuable, and that at the last, when they had accomplished their labours, that was to be done which was resolved upon at the outset—namely, the Bill was to be rejected with contempt. We are told that the attempt to avoid this is what is bringing degradation upon the proceedings of the House of Commons. I can conceive no greater degradation than that the other House, the Representatives of the people, should be occupied day after day listening to speeches repeated over and over and over again, not with the intention of convincing anyone, not with the idea that they were to have any effect on the Bill, but in order that other legislation might be delayed or rendered impossible, it being announced and gloried in beforehand that this House, whatever might be the result in the other House, would cast the Bill to the winds. That seems to me as deep a depth of degradation as any to which the House of Commons could descend. I am second to none in my desire that the honour of the other House should be maintained. The constituencies will know and will judge what best maintains the honour of the other House—that discussion should be reasonable and fair, and directed to the measure in hand, or that it should have a secondary purpose, not with the view of improving the measure, not even with the view of expressing an opinion on the measure, but with the view of using one measure as a machine to prevent other measures which you dislike still more from being dealt with. I think it is noteworthy that in this Debate we have listened to two noble Lords—the noble Duke to-night, and the noble Marquess of Lansdowne last night—distinguished Members of the Party called the Liberal Unionist Party—neither of whom has made the slightest allusion to the fact, as being a matter which ought to weigh with this House for an instant, that this measure comes to us with the sanction of the Commons House of Parliament. It is treated as a matter of absolute indifference. Your Lordships have been invited to consider this Bill, discuss its provisions, and reject it to-night as though it had never been heard of elsewhere. It may be that the judgment of the other House is not to be treated as conclusive here, but it is something new to hear from those who call themselves Liberals such treatment of a measure coming sanctioned by the majority of the other House as this measure has received. The noble Duke, on a former occasion, said there were times when this House would stand firm, and, notwithstanding the passage of a measure by the other House, should, none the less, reject it. On that occasion he maintained that this House ought to weigh well before rejecting a measure which had been passed by the House of Commons, and at that time he dwelt upon the reasons peculiar to that Bill, which certainly do not apply to this, why regard should not be had to a measure which the other House had passed. It seems to me that this is a new attitude, and I doubt very much whether it will be found to be an attitude tending to the advantage and stability of this House. The noble Duke began his speech by saying that he had never heard a Bill introduced with so little attempt to establish a case for it, and yet, at the conclusion of his speech, he spoke of removing dangers and healing sores. He seemed then, at last, to recognise that there was indeed some case for it, even if he did not consider the case sufficient. What is the meaning of talking of removing danger unless danger there be, or of healing sores unless sores existed which may produce dangerous and mischievous consequences? And is there any ground in the interest of Ireland for introducing the Bill? I do not for a moment imagine that the opinion of the present Chief Secretary for Ireland will have any weight with your Lordships. Yet it has been admitted by a Conservative Irish Member that he has been distinguished in the administration of the country by firmness and consistency, and that the results are such as have been desired. On his responsibility, having charge of that country, he has expressed in the strongest terms the opinion that this measure is called for in the interests of peace and order in Ireland. But I pass by an authority of that description, which I know will not weigh a featherweight with the majority of your Lordships. I will come to an authority which I think you must pay respect to. What said the late Chief Secretary for Ireland—

> "He did not think there was any justification for saying that the Unionist Party, as the result of their opposition to the Bill, had set their faces against any plan which would tend towards solving what he admitted to be a very great difficulty in Ireland."

What said another authority? No one knows the disturbed parts of Ireland better than Mr. Carson. There was not a Magisterial Court in the disturbed parts of Ireland in which his presence was not perfectly familiar, and what are his words?—

> "He knew enough of Ireland to say he believed and admitted that the question of the evicted tenants, whether they were rightly or wrongly evicted, whether they were evicted for the purpose of advancing a particular class of politics or not—that so long as it remained unsettled the question of the evicted tenants meant a great deal with reference to the peace of Ireland."

Now we are told that this Bill is a wanton invention of Her Majesty's Government, without rhyme or reason, founded upon nothing connected with the peace of Ireland. "Meant a great deal with reference to the peace of Ireland" are weighty words coming from one who knows Ireland so well as the hon. and learned Gentleman. If the unsettlement of the question means much for the peace of Ireland, is it not in the interest of Ireland, is it not, above all things, in the interests of the landlords of Ireland, that the question should be settled? I do not dwell further upon the question of the justification for the introduction of such a Bill. I have made a sufficient case by the language I have read. But this I will say—that there are others in addition to the two gentlemen I have quoted who are not in the slightest degree in sympathy with the Government, who have exhibited the bitterest hostility to them, and would like to terminate their existence to-morrow, who have pointed out in language equally weighty that this is not a question of Party, that this is not a question which concerns Her Majesty's Government, but that it is a question which concerns the peace of Ireland and which will concern any Government that has to administer that country. If this question is settled by this Bill it is not necessarily Her Majesty's Government who will reap the fruits. You believe that very shortly you will take their place, and it is you who will then reap the fruit of a measure of this description. I am certain of this—that if such a change takes place your Lordships will then find that it is absolutely necessary, either by this measure or by some other, I am not now dealing with the nature of the measure, but with the question of the necessity for any measure at all—I say your Lordships will find that it is necessary, in some way or other, to deal with the question. Now I come to what is the principle of the Bill. The noble Duke has said that it involves various principles which may practically be summed up in one. I should like to say with regard to that question what was said by the Duke of Argyll when he was defending the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, with regard to which the same language was used and the same attack made upon the principles it was supposed to involve. He said that—

> "Legislation is not one of the exact sciences. I think it most dangerous to say of any measure that, because you adopt a little bit of a certain principle which, if carried further, would be bad and unjust, therefore, when you carried it a small way it was equally bad and unjust."

I adopt his words, which express my views—

> "It is a temporary measure to meet exceptional circumstances in the interests of peace in Ireland."

In endeavouring to meet some of the objections which have been urged against the Bill, my arguments will be directed not to matters of detail, but to questions of principle. I say at the outset that I do not for a moment deny the force of many of the arguments and objections that have been urged against the Bill. It has never been denied that the subject is a most thorny and difficult one, and that any measure purporting to deal with it must be open to criticism and objection. If it is an evil that has to be dealt with it is not satisfactory to say that we can point out this or that objection to it. The truth is, that there is scarcely any subject on which you can legislate at all which is not open to objection. There is no Royal road to legislation along which you can march without difficulty. If the measure which the Duke of Devonshire has spoken of to-night were to take shape and form, and to be crystallised into sections of a Bill, I should probably be able to pick in it as many holes as he has tried to pick in this Bill. It has been objected to the Bill that it is a measure under which those who have taken part in an illegal conspiracy might be restored to their holdings. What a lesson, it is said, this would teach! What disturbance it would be likely to lead to! But I observe a considerable difference of opinion with regard to these points. The Duke of Argyll said that, if it were a measure to restore only those who had been misled by the Plan of Campaign, any such measure, apart from compulsory principles, would have his hearty support. It does not seem to me that the question of principle I am discussing depends upon whether the Bill is a voluntary or a compulsory one. If you ought not to countenance the Plan of Campaigners—if you ought not to let them resume possession of their holdings because of the consequences to which it will induce, you ought not to do so by a voluntary scheme any more than by compulsion. You ought not to take the public money to assist a settlement of that description if it is to be regarded as condoning immorality. Lord Balfour spoke of another class—those who had been evicted owing to circumstances of misfortune, and the noble Marquess spoke last night of some other class; so that, if all these classes be taken together, I find that there would be a considerable consensus of opinion in favour of permitting the return of everybody that this Bill proposes to deal with. I have never hesitated to express in plain and unequivocal terms my opinion of the Plan of Campaign; but it seems to me that, however ready one may be to admit its evils and the wrongs that were done in connection with it, I think a greater injustice would be done, and has been done in representing those who took part in the Plan of Campaign as necessarily immoral and wicked men. I think it fair and just that we should look at the matter from the point of view of the tenants of Ireland. There were two principal circumstances under which the Plan of Campaign was initiated. On some estates it arose from the fact that there had been very bad times as regards agricultural produce. That was recognised in the Act of 1887. In consequence of that, there were undoubtedly tenants who were unable to pay their rents, and there were undoubtedly landlords who were not prepared to make concessions which would have prevented the tenants from losing their holdings. On some estates the tenants who were able to discharge their obligations to the full felt that, if they were not to stand by those tenants who were not in a position to do so, unless the demand for a reduction came from all, they would have no support and would lose their holdings. I am not justifying them; I am not saying they were right; but I say there were many cases where the action of these men was not dictated by ignoble motive or by personal greed, but where they made great and serious sacrifices in order to stand by those of their own class and to save them from misfortune. Again, there were those who resented the interference of landlords from a distance in the efforts between landlord and tenant to settle their disputes upon reasonable terms. They thought that if the landlords were thus banded together to prevent that settlement it was equally fair for the tenants to combine in their interests. I think that in some cases, so far from these men being ignoble, base, and unworthy of consideration, they acted with a rare unselfishness, and subjected themselves to immense loss, sacrifice, and inconvenience for the sake of their fellows. I think it would be a great wrong to attribute to all those connected with the Plan of Campaign the responsibility of the acts of violence that were committed. We have had strikes recently in this country in connection with which there have been acts of violence committed; but it would be a grievous wrong, a monstrous thing, to charge all those who took part in those strikes with the responsibility of those discreditable acts. I maintain, therefore, that if it be otherwise expedient and desirable to introduce a measure of this description, we ought not to refrain from doing it because some of those who may be within the scope of its terms have been guilty of acts of which we all disapprove. The noble Duke and my noble and learned Friend who has just sat down have put before us cases in which it would be a great hardship to the landlord to have the evicted tenant forced back upon him. But these cases are not typical. It does not follow that everything that comes within the powers of a tribunal, whatever that tribunal might be, would be taken advantage of by men—that all the results will follow which conceivably could follow; and you can never establish any system or arrangement of any kind in which there would not be possible cases of hardship and injustice. There is no system of law and judicature under which there are not hard cases, under which there is not, in the general and popular sense of the expression, some injustice suffered. The noble Duke intimated that under this Bill a tenant who did not fulfil the obligations which the law imposed upon him might be restored to his holding, and thus the landlord deprived of the full rights which the law conferred upon him. He said that one of the objects of the Act of 1881 was to secure to the landlord certain rights, and that to deprive him of any rights that were secured to him by the Act would amount virtually to a repeal of that measure. My Lords, the noble Duke, I observed, made no allusion to the Act of 1887. If to deprive the landlord of the rights secured to him by the Act of 1881 would be an injustice which this House ought not to tolerate, I may observe that this House has already sanctioned such injustice, for rights conferred under the Act of 1881 were undoubtedly interfered with by the Act of 1887. I will now ask your Lordships to consider what will be the effect of this Bill upon tenants who have retained their holdings and upon new tenants. It is said that it is a dreadful thing to reward tenants who have not paid their rents and who had been evicted, and to put them into a better position than that of tenants who have stood by their landlords, and who did not join the combination against the payment of rents. But does this Bill really propose to reward the tenant whom it will restore? If he has sinned, surely he has suffered, and that suffering cannot be got rid of by Act of Parliament. He has been in many cases living very differently from the way in which he lived before; he has been out of his holding, and has not had an agreeable or happy time. You do not reward him by putting him back, for his position when he has returned is less favourable than that of the tenant who has remained in his holdings.

Earl CADOGAN: He gets his rent revised.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): It is true that he gets his rent fixed by the Land Court, but that is a right which every tenant will have by the time that this Bill comes into operation to any considerable extent. I maintain that the old tenant gets no reward, and I do not believe that the tenants who have remained in their holdings will resent the return of the tenant who has been evicted. I believe that the tenants who have remained will be glad to see the land that has been unoccupied re-occupied by the former tenant. Do your Lordships think that every man who does not go out when a strike takes place has necessarily a feeling of hostility towards those who do? No; he may not go out, but his sympathies are often with those who do. Taking into consideration that feeling, and also the feeling for their own class which animates the tenants of Ireland, I believe that you would create no ill-feeling among the tenants who have retained possession of their holdings if you were to pass this Bill. Now I turn to the effect of the Bill upon the new tenant. It is said that he will have an indirect but severe compulsion exerted upon him. Well, it seems to me that in the speeches which we have heard there has been the groundless assumption that there is a source of inconvenience and possibly danger in the future to the new tenants in the presence in the neighbourhood of the evicted tenants, looking at the land and longing for it. Happily, peace now reigns in Ireland; but we should be blind to the teaching of the past if we believed that it was certain that peace would always reign there. How often have we seen, when we have thought agrarian troubles ended, some small spark grow into a flame and a recrudescence of crime. What security have we—what security can any man who knows the history of Ireland have—that the condition of things which exists to-day will always continue? It has been said that the new tenant would be placed in a difficulty if he refused to accede to the suggestion that he should make way for the old tenant. But if the old tenants were filled with despair, if they lost all hope of being restored to their holdings, which to them means life and all that life holds dear, do you think that they might not give way to the counsels of despair? Do you think that the state of things in Ireland would be perfectly satisfactory? I trust that the persons concerned might not give way to despair, but I maintain that it would be in the highest degree unwise and unstatesmanlike to regard the condition of things which exists now as one upon which either landlord or new tenant can look with perfect satisfaction. This Bill is a hopeful method of settling the difficulty. Even if the new tenant is unwilling to make way for the old tenant, it does not abandon the latter to the counsels of despair. There is a hope for him even then of beginning a new life, for provision may be made for his migration elsewhere, so that on another holding, removed from the scene of his former life, he may begin again. If such a state of things as that can be brought about, do not you think that it would be far better for the landlord and the new tenant than that things should remain as they are now? I believe that this Bill, far from acting unjustly, would act beneficially in the interests both of the landlord and the new tenant. It has been said that the tribunal proposed in this Bill is a tribunal of an arbitrary and secret character; that it has no rules for its guidance, and that it cannot be called judicial. It has been pointed out that one Arbitrator can act alone, but no reference has been made to the fact that there is a right of appeal by either party to have the three Arbitrators sitting together, if he wishes them to do so, under the fourth section of the 32 & 33 Vict., which is incorporated in this Bill.

LORD HALSBURY: My noble and learned Friend is in error. The provisions in the Schedule of the Bill will not give the right to which the noble and learned Lord referred. The provision to which he has referred has been repealed by the Statute Law Revision Committee; and in its place there is another and a totally different tribunal.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): I do not think my noble and learned Friend follows the point, because what is referred to is the fourth section of 32 & 33 Vict. It does not matter whether it has been repealed by another Act. That provision to which I have referred is included in this Bill, just as if it were set out in terms.

LORD HALSBURY: I only intervene again for my noble and learned Friend's own sake. I do not wish to take him by surprise, as I intend to deal with this point in my speech. That portion of the Act has been repealed, and another substituted for it.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): In any event, this is a matter of legal argument which will not prove of special interest to the House. I am not satisfied by what the noble Lord has said, that that provision is not to be taken as enacted in this Bill. If that is the result, it is a result not intended, and the matter might perfectly well be set right if the Bill went into Committee. It was not intended, and it is only by an elaborate legal argument it can be shown to exist. I come now to the tribunal. It has been said that it is an unheard-of thing to establish a tribunal without laying down fixed rules for its guidance, and especially a tribunal which has to deal with matters of property. Your Lordships are familiar with a tribunal which deals with very serious matters of property, a tribunal consisting in part of layman—I mean the Railway Commissioners—which has to determine without any guidance of principle laid down, questions affecting most seriously the rights of property of Railway Companies. Therefore, I deny that this Bill embodies a new principle. I remind your Lordships that in Ireland unfortunately we have seen Courts constituted such as we never should have endured in England. [*Opposition cheers.*] Yes, you cheer that; you have the greatest horror of any Court being established in Ireland and different from a Court in England when it deals with a question of property and with questions affecting landlords. But I was alluding to Courts constituted with a couple of men without legal training—half-pay officers and officers of constabulary—who had powers to deal with the liberties of their fellow-subjects in a manner which would not be tolerated in this country. You have no objection to these exceptional Courts when they are Courts of coercion by men untrained in the law and deciding questions of the utmost difficulty involving the liberty of their fellow-men.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: In a disturbed country.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): I venture to say that no Minister will get up, however much this country is disturbed, and dare to propose the enactment of any such provisions as those contained in the Coercion Act. He could not do it if he would; it would not be endured by the people of this country. I am dealing now with the nature of the Court. Of course, you may require exceptional legislation for a disturbed country; but at least you ought to choose Courts of a character fit to decide questions involving the liberty of the subject.

A noble LORD: May I be allowed to say that the Stipendiary Magistrates acted according to law, and could only act according to law?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): The Resident Magistrates to whom the difficult duties of the Coercion Act were entrusted were men of no legal training—men who were wholly trained in the Army and Constabulary. I maintain that in the nature of the tribunal proposed to be set up by this Bill there is nothing of which any reasonable complaint can be made. My noble and learned Friend put a number of questions to me as to whether the tribunal could say whether a certain thing was reasonable or not, what were "the circumstances of the district," and a number of questions about the details of the Bill which might very well be considered if we are going into Committee. But it would be mere trifling to deal with them now when we are considering the great principles involved on the Second Reading. I will not waste my breath on them, because it seems to me that it would be idle to waste one's time or breath upon them when you are going to throw out the Bill. There is not one of those objections, whatever may be said on the matter of compromise, that could not be met by an Amendment in Committee. If it were shown that any words would be better than those chosen, or that mischief or harm would result from those we have selected, we are open to any suggestions and are ready to make any Amendments to make the Bill more workable, satisfactory, and just. But it is idle to discuss that question when we are told that no Amendment will satisfy noble Lords. It is said that this measure could not be accepted because it cannot settle the question. Those arguments are the same as were heard on the Second Reading of the Land Act and on the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. We have heard to-night the echoes of those discussions. It is also said that the Land Act of 1881 did not settle the question. I do not say that it did; but when the noble Duke points to his prediction as to its failure and the consequences of carrying it, I should like to invite your Lordships to consider what would have been the effect if that Bill had not passed. We have heard of agitation and of disturbance in Ireland—of landlords suffering a reduction in their incomes, and therefore it is said that the Land Act of 1881 has failed. There was a very interesting series of letters published by a County Court Judge in Ireland not in sympathy with my politics at all with reference to the condition of Ireland in relation to the Purchase Act of the late Government. He said that there is no greater or more fatal mistake for Englishmen to make than to suppose that the disturbances which they hear of in Ireland, and which characterise certain districts of Ireland, are characteristics of the whole country. He says that through all the disturbed times on four-fifths of the estates in Ireland rents had been paid with as great punctuality as they have been in England; and when we hear of the sacrifices forced on Ireland by the Land Act of 1881, I have not seen it shown yet—and I have seen much evidence to the contrary—that the landlords have suffered one whit more in reduction of rent than the landlords of England have through economic causes. Is it a valid argument to say that because you cannot hope completely to settle this difficulty you ought not to attempt to settle it at all? The argument has been this: that there must be under any scheme some tenants left outside, and that, therefore, the difficulty still remains. But if that is to be a valid argument it applies equally against a voluntary scheme as against a compulsory one. A voluntary settlement is to be brought about by the use of public money, but what right have you to use public money for such a purpose if, according to you, it would not settle the question? But it is not wise or statesmanlike to say that because there may be danger you should not seek to diminish that danger and to restrict the area within narrow limits because you cannot hope to wipe it out altogether. The more you can diminish the centres and areas of danger, the greater your hope and chances of safety. I believe that there exist in Ireland many spots where you have what the noble Duke called "a powder magazine," which any spark may set on fire. You know not when that spark may be applied. You know not when the time of danger will come. You have no security that the time will not come. Is it not wise to make those spots as few as possible, and to restrict the sources of danger within the narrowest possible limits? I come now to what has been stated with regard to the compulsory character of this Bill. The noble Duke stated to-night that it had been alleged that if this Bill were made voluntary it would settle nine-tenths of the cases. Does not that show that if this Bill were carried the area of compulsion would be but small? There is nothing in this Act to prevent voluntary arrangement; indeed, there is a provision to encourage it, and if voluntary arangement settled nine-tenths of the cases, there would be very little left for compulsion. I maintain it is in the interests of the landlord and of the new tenant that this question should be settled. If the proposition that this measure will tend to that settlement be sound, then I assert that every landlord who unreasonably refuses a settlement is injuring the whole of his class as well as tending to disturb the peace of Ireland. It is in the public interest that the hundreds and thousands of acres which are derelict should be occupied. It is not unjustifiable to say, "You are the owner of the land, but a condition of things has arisen under which the land has been left derelict. The vast majority of your class have made arrangements to bring the land again into cultivation. Do you refuse to do so?" I say that no wrong is done to that man or to his class, but that it is for the welfare of his class as well as to the advantage of the country that such arrangements should be made, compulsorily if necessary. Everyone would rather have a voluntary than a compulsory Bill if it had been introduced. Can it be supposed that it is for any pleasure or satisfaction in itself that the compulsory principle has been introduced? If it has been introduced, it has been because there has been a great object in view, which could not be obtained without the compulsory principle. Are there no estates which will recur to the minds of your Lordships where landlords have acted unreasonably? We in this House hear the landlords' view largely. We have had a procession of Irish landlords, if I might use the term. One would have liked to have heard a few of the tenants' views on particular estates. Any landlord who acts unreasonably injures his class, injures the public, renders the government of Ireland burdensome, and increases the taxes that have to be levied for the administration of law and order in Ireland. Where such a state of things exists—as exist it does; known to all of us—to say that nothing could justify the introduction of a measure which would impose on any man any compulsion; to say that he may leave his land derelict, however unreasonably, however great the disadvantage to the public, however great the wrong done to others—I say that that is an unreasonable view. It is pressing rights to an unreasonable length; and I believe that there is nothing worse in the interests of property than that the rights of property should be pressed to an extreme and unreasonable length. The noble Duke has said that we have shown no disposition to agree to a compromise on this matter. What is the condition which he makes? He says, "We cannot re-frame this Bill. We cannot put it into any different shape. You yourselves bring down and put upon the Table the Amendments which you would propose or would consent to, and then we will tell you whether we are willing to assent to them." I will venture to say in the whole history of Parliamentary legislation no such suggestion was ever made before? The proposals for an Amendment or compromise must come from those who are not satisfied with the Bill in its original shape, and who desire Amendments to be made And for whom does the noble Marquess (Lord Lansdowne) speak when he makes the suggestion? We have heard of the editorial "we," which means the person who writes the article; but I am not sure how far beyond the noble Marquess himself his "we" extends. The noble Duke spoke in similar terms; but though I have listened to the subsequent Debate, till this time I have not heard that "we" re-echoed from the Opposition side of the House. It would be little satisfaction to us to satisfy the noble Marquess and the noble Duke only, because that would not carry the Bill, unless we satisfied also another noble Marquess who is all-powerful in this House. I will tell you why we despair of any compromise or settlement. I have read the discussion in the other House when this Bill was introduced, and I have noticed its tone and temper. I recall how an Amendment was put down which would have pledged the House to adopt a fair and reasonable settlement. I know from the author of that proposal that he was made to take that Amendment off the Paper because he was told that it would not receive the support of the Conservative Party, whom the landlords of Ireland had forced to meet the Bill, not with an Amendment of that kind, but with a completely hostile Amendment, and with no suggestion of a fair and equitable settlement. After hearing the speech of the hon. Member who proposed that settlement, what hope or use would there be in holding out any suggestions on our part, however willing we may be to listen and welcome any reasonable suggestions? The attitude taken by that hon. Member is not insignificant in relation to some of the matters of which I have spoken. Why is he so keen for this settlement? Why is he so anxious that Parliament should at least seem willing to settle it? He does not love us or our politics, and he does not wish to make things easy and pleasant for us in Ireland. He knows the tenantry of Ireland, if he knows anything; and he knows the tenantry in the North of Ireland, who do not agree with us. I venture to say that I am not making a wrong deduction from his action when I say that he knows that those tenants, though Unionist in politics, are not without their keen sympathies for the evicted tenants in other parts of Ireland. In that little fact there is enough to indicate the sources of danger to those who are wise enough to read the signs of the times. I am quite aware that nothing can be said which is likely to induce your Lordships to change your attitude towards this Bill. I regret it. I believe, with all my heart, that it is a mistaken course. I believe that one day it will be seen to be a mistaken course. If it were possible, even at this late hour, to observe any change of the attitude of extreme hostility to this Bill, I should welcome it. For this I say, adopting the words which were used by the noble Earl who then led the Opposition in closing the Debate on the Compensation for Disturbance Bill—words which, I believe, may be applied with vastly more truth to this case than to that—

> "If, after all, you were to accept this Bill, you would do an act for which your country would be grateful and for which posterity would commend you."

Lord HALSBURY: My Lords, although my noble and learned Friend has occupied his fair share of this Debate, I am compelled to say that the one thing he has not done is to explain or defend this Bill. We have had what I confess to my mind looks like an attack, and an intimation to all your Lordships who take a different view to my noble and learned Friend. It does not appear to be respectful. He commenced and closed with the remark that, however conclusively he established his proposition, however clear the necessity for this Bill might be, he was perfectly aware that it would not have the slightest effect upon the majority of you.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): That was in reference to what my noble Friend had said.

Lord HALSBURY: I am extremely glad to hear that explanation, because I heard with some pain the observation repeated only within the last few words of the argument, and, therefore, I am glad to accept his explanation. We had to appeal to the authority of the other House. I am not aware that the authority of the other House was in question at all. Of course, I can understand, if the rejection of this Bill is to be made the subject of attack at meetings in the country and elsewhere, such an expression as that of my noble and learned Friend is of great use. I regret that that topic should be introduced here. My noble and learned Friend's advocacy was extremely skilful; he has managed to direct the discussion to a subject that is not what we are engaged upon. The subject we are engaged upon here is the Second Reading of this Bill, and I confess I should like to know, and I hope to hear from the Prime Minister, if we are to read the Bill a second time, what is the principle they affirm. Because I suppose it is a part of the Parliamentary procedure that we affirm the principles of this Bill by the Second Reading. I will discuss in a moment of what it consists, but before I pass away from my noble and learned Friend's initial observation, I must refer for a moment to another observation of his about the passage of this Bill in the other House. One noble Lord had had the temerity to say that the gag was never applied to this Bill. That is astonishing when we remember the Resolution of the 1st of August; but I suppose he meant it did not become necessary, because with a due sense of their own dignity those who were discussing the Bill declined to have a sham discussion, and withdrew from the discussion. One further observation was made by my noble and learned Friend on a very dangerous topic. He said this Bill had been based and had come to us by the voice and the will of the Representatives of the people. He told us he never approved of the Plan of Campaign as a thing which could be upheld. Did it ever occur to him to ask himself how many of the Representatives of the people combined in that conspiracy? When one considers the history of this measure and the mode by which this Bill has been introduced, and the way in which the Government had used a majority far exceeding their proper number to force this Bill through the Commons, the matter which I should think would be most important to consider would be the provisions of the Bill itself. It is idle of my noble and learned Friend to dismiss the tribunal as of little importance. Why, the very essence of the Bill is the tribunal, or so-called tribunal, which is constituted under it.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): I beg to say I did not say anything of the kind.

Lord HALSBURY: I will accept any explanation that my noble and learned Friend likes to offer. From the beginning to the end of his speech he has not once replied to the observation that the tribunal he has constituted is a tribunal that can do anything it pleases. The constitution of this tribunal constitutes the whole point of this Bill. I can quite understand Parliament in its supreme authority laying down certain laws, perhaps different from ours. I can imagine Parliament in its authority laying down a code for Ireland, but it should be for the people then to know what are their rights. But this creates three Dictators, who are to make their own laws, and who are to have no guidance by Statute what to do, but to determine each by the circumstances of the district. What is the meaning of "the circumstances of the district"? What were the circumstances of the district which made it desirable that a certain tenant should be restored. It is perfectly novel in the whole history of British legislation and my noble Friend has been challenged for a precedent for such a system and he has failed, and where he has failed none are likely to succeed. In the Mathew Commission evidence was given that in a great number of cases the evicted tenants were restored, but in two or three of them it was said that difficulties had arisen with the landlord, and on further inquiry it was found that the landlord, in more than one case, had restored the great body of the tenants, but would refuse to restore those who had been the leaders of the agitation against the authority of the law. Is such a thing to justify the restoration of the leaders of the Plan of Campaign in a particular district? It is not for us to conjecture; we have a right to know from the Government what is the meaning of those words. Over and over again the Lord Chancellor had declined to give any explanation. We are not told what the Government mean by "circumstances of the district or some other cause appearing to them sufficient." What does that mean? It means anything in the world. The legal principle that you can refer them to some common jury does not apply here. I can imagine no common jury to which they could be brought so that they could limit the authority of this tribunal. When you deal with the landlord's rights you have another question. I am not concerned at present to discuss his rights more than any others, but because the man owns the land instead of the money with which the land can be bought, you surely are not going to say that he is to be treated on a different principle. My noble and learned Friend would not for a moment induce such experimental legislation. Would you dare to make such a tribunal as this determine the position of capital and labour? If you would your tenure of Office would expire to-morrow. Why is the landlord to be treated differently? Why not treat all in the same way? I noticed one very significant fact that was brought out in the House of Commons the other night. One Member was asked, "Give me a single instance where a landlord has been harsh," and for his sins he was tempted to give the name of the tenant. The matter was very soon explained, and he was compelled to admit that that was a totally different case. The challenge was not responded to. What does this question amount to? An attempt to take away a man's property without compensation. You say you do not take the property from the landlords, but only prevent them exercising their will. It seems to me that you take my life if you take the property which would sustain my life; but the tribunal which is to deal with the question is, as I say, left without guidance entirely. The question in dispute here is that the landlord has got the land and the tenant wants to get it. That is not a dispute. One man wants the property of another. It is sometimes distinguished in our Courts by another and a harsher name. Go to the country and say, "Here is an existing sore; here is a thing which makes the government of Ireland difficult, and we propose a remedy." Well, the Lords throw it out. That is their fault. Why do you not demand the Bill if you believe that 80 per cent. of the cases will be settled voluntarily? If that could be done, why did not the Government do it in this Bill? Is it the fact that they would not be permitted to do so in the other House? It has been so suggested. I cannot tell. They know their own secrets better than I do. If you really think that 80 per cent. of the cases would be settled by voluntary arrangements it is obvious that the objection of this Bill would be a very small one—only 20 per cent. It was a gross fallacy. Many a landlord who was in a position of influence in his county would assist and aid any voluntary principle by which he and his tenants might be made friends for the future, but when he is confronted with a measure which at every turn annihilated his rights he would hardly be disposed to do so. My noble and learned Friend says it actually increases the facility for voluntary settlement. If it does, it is the oddest voluntary settlement I have ever heard of in my life. That being the condition of the Bill, my noble and learned Friend, I think with great skill and his accustomed caution, does not say one word about it. I have not heard a single word except such as lead me to believe that the authors of the Bill did not exactly know what they were dealing with. My noble and learned Friend said, I suppose after the conviction was forced upon him, that I was right and he was wrong, that it was a matter of no importance. If this Bill passed into law, I take it my noble and learned Friend would deal with it as it is, and the effect will be this: that Her Majesty's Government will not know to what tribunal these things are to be referred. It almost seems as if the Government had made up its mind that such a Bill could not pass. It is all very well for my noble and learned Friend to say that posterity will discharge the debts which are incurred in its behalf. I heard all that 20 years ago in the House of Commons, but we are now doing the same thing all over again. Was it for this object that this Bill was brought forward? I read an instructing paragraph in *The Freeman's Journal*, which I will trouble the House with. It says:—

> "Mr. Dillon, if need be, will show how little tired he is of the fight to plant a flag in Ireland."

That is one of their leaders. It is in *The Freeman's Journal*, and I suppose the authority of that will be recognised. The sacred right of a man to be tried for his life by his fellows was abolished in Ireland by a Government of which my noble and learned Friend was a Member, and I think—I forget the exact number—that something like 1,000 people were imprisoned in Kilmainham. It may be it was necessary, and I am not commenting upon it as anything that ought to be complained of against the Government of the day, but we never did anything to abolish the rights of people in Ireland as the Government, of which my noble and learned Friend is a Member, has done. This is a Bill which, it cannot be denied, has set at defiance all the rights of the people, and the only thing we hear is the old cuckoo cry—"Here is a great social evil in Ireland, and we must do something for it." I did expect from my noble and learned Friend when he got up to hear something in defence of this measure, but here, on the last night of the Debate, from the beginning to the end not one word has he said in defence of it. Is that a respectable attitude? He also used the old formula, "If you throw it out it will not add to the stability of your Lordships' House." I think it ought to be understood in future, and that formula ought to be adopted. The broad fact remains stamped on the measure that the Irish people who disobeyed the law are to be put in the places of the planter tenants who stepped in to restore the land, and the planter tenants are to be removed. I believe if this Bill had been one which affected the evicted tenants alone it would have been bad enough, but this will open up contracts or arrangements which have existed between parties for 15 years. Did you ever hear of such a system of legislation? It seems to me it only wanted that to show how to render it impossible. It is a Bill calculated to injure the Irish people, and this is described as a message of peace.

LORD HOWTH said, he remembered as far back as 1870 having the privilege of sitting in the other House, and he felt it his duty then to say a few words on the Land Bill then passing through, and he remembered remarking that that Bill did not go far enough in favour of the tenant on the score of expediency and on the score of avoiding future trouble and of lessening future crime and ill-feeling. He was in accord with the principles of the present Bill; but when he considered its authorship and the circumstances under which it had been brought forward, he felt it incumbent upon him to vote against it. The Government, like men in monetary difficulties, had waited till the last moment to pay their debt. They had declined to deal with the measure till the last moment, and had then refused to allow it to be discussed. He did not think that even Mr. Gladstone in his great anxiety for the welfare and prosperity of the Irish tenants ever advocated or thought of bringing forward a measure of this character. Under the Home Rule Bill it was provided that a certain number of years should elapse before any legislation should be undertaken with regard to the land, and these tenants would have been kept out in the cold. With regard to this Bill, he regretted to see that it was so very one-sided. He did not know whether Her Majesty's Ministers framed the Bill; he hardly thought that they could have done, for it bore so strong an imitation of another Bill framed in opposition to the landlords' interests. He held that they as landlords had a right to rebel against such a measure. The vital question raised in connection with it was to be found in the compulsory clauses, and without going over the already well-trodden ground he would simply observe that he could not possibly support such a proposal. Unless some compromise could be made, and the voluntary principle inserted, the Bill could not be allowed to pass. He could not understand the unwillingness of the Government to make this change, for he was certain that if they went round to the evicted tenants themselves and got an expression of their opinions, irrespective of their leaders and the priests, they would find them willing to accept a voluntary Bill. The Lord Chancellor had told them that the voluntary principle could not be accepted because under it it would not be possible to allow the expenditure of public money; but he believed that if the Government were willing they could overcome that difficulty. One point had been altogether lost sight of in the course of the Debates on the Bill, and it was the resisting power of the landlords. It appeared to him they would be able to develop a great resisting power, and it was almost impossible to describe what might occur in the way of trouble and annoyance if an evicted tenant were forced upon them. He thought it would be well if some of the more sincere friends of the Irish tenants would make it clear to them that unless the compulsory system was modified very greatly, and indeed got rid of altogether, there was no prospect whatever of these unfortunate people being restored to their homes. As to the landlords, who were on their defence that day, he ventured to assert that they were in no way to blame for the present condition of affairs. He had only one other point to touch upon, and that was a danger ahead of them should the Bill ever become law. He believed one of the objects of the promoters of the measure was to make the valuation to be placed upon derelict farms and broken-down fences and cabins a precedent for future valuations. One of these valuations would probably have to be made next year, and it would be very hard if the valuations made under the Bill were to constitute a basis for valuations all over the country. He did not wish to censure Her Majesty's Government for this; probably they had not foreseen this possible result, which, however, was certainly contemplated by the tenants' advisers and by the clergy. Although he spoke with every respect for Mr. Fottrell, one of the persons most skilled in settling differences between Irish landlords and tenants, he ought to be aware of this great danger—a danger all the more emphasised by the very reason of his admitted eminence in making valuations. He thought that valuations made under the Bill should be treated as exceptional, and in no way affect the general principle of valuation now obtaining in Ireland. If the Bill were modified and made voluntary, it might be accepted as a measure of mercy and charity, but as at present framed it certainly did not offer the best way of giving relief to the unfortunate evicted tenants.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord SANDHURST) said, that although he was not an Irish landlord, and had not the honour of following the profession of the law, he wished to say a few words on this Bill. He had hoped that the noble Lord who had just spoken would have given the Government his vote, for he had expressed himself in favour of a Voluntary Bill, and if this measure were allowed to pass a Second Reading their Lordships in Committee could amend it in any way they desired. He had also hoped that the Government might claim and receive the vote of the Duke of Argyll to the Second Reading of this Bill, because every word of the speech of the noble Duke on the Compensation for Disturbance Bill 13 or 14 years ago applied to the Bill now before their Lordships. He well remembered the Debate on that Bill, and he was on that occasion immensely struck with the speech of the noble Duke, for it made him realise for the first time—he was then young in politics—the grave importance of the Irish Land Question. The policy of the Government in relation to Ireland was frequently subjected to attack from many quarters, but he ventured to claim on its behalf that, at any rate, it had so far been successful, for never had there been a time when Ireland was more tranquil under the ordinary law than it was now. He had been told by many people high in authority in the country as statesmen that the question really before the Irish people was not the Home Rule but the Land question, and that being so he ventured to think this Bill would go far in giving satisfaction to the Irish tenants. Lord Lonsdale had reminded their Lordships that this was a political question. But then almost every question that came before them for discussion was political. Personally, he would be inclined to describe this as a social Bill rather than as a political one—its principal purpose being well described by the words, "to live and let live." He wished to refer for a few minutes to what was known as Mr. Russell's clause. The noble Lord who was lately Lord Chancellor of England had asserted that the Government when the Bill came to the House knew that it would not pass, and indeed did not expect it to. He ventured to assure the noble Lord that until the Second Reading in the other House the Government were extremely sanguine that it would become law. In very many quarters a desire had been expressed that a settlement should be come to, and it was only in the course of the Second Reading Debate that the attitude of *non possumus* was taken up. As to Mr. Russell's clause, which had now become famous, how was it drafted in the first instance? When it was laid before the House of Commons in 1891, Mr. Russell proposed that it should be ante-dated five years, which would just bring in the Plan of Campaign tenants, and he explained it would bring to an end about three-fourths of the disputes, and would apply to the Coolgreany, Ponsonby, and Olphert estates. Mr. Balfour at that time also expressed an opinion that anything which could be done to settle these disputes ought to be supported. But later, on the suggestion of Mr. Sexton, a proposal was made to ante-date the clause from the 1st of May, 1879, and it was the date adopted in the Bill. Unhappily, as Mr. Russell had said, the clause was not successful, and the Government were now laying before their Lordships something which it was hoped would meet the difficulties of the case. As would be remembered, Mr. Russell's clause dealt only with the tenantless lands, and Mr. Russell in his speech on it said—

> "So far as the tenanted holdings are concerned, there are great difficulties in bringing them under the operation of the clause."

But what were his reasons for that? The lateness of the Session and the possibility that the clause might not be carried in another place if such holdings were included. But it evidently occurred to this gentleman, who was an influential Member of the Unionist Party, that it would be right to use the public credit for the purpose of reinstating these tenants. As he had said, the clause failed, and it had been alleged in some quarters that it failed by reason of the provision for a six months' notice; and further it was suggested that the failure was brought about by certain combinations that, however, did not appear to be known to the Mathew Commission, because that body expressly reported that they did not think there had been any wish or any combination to frustrate the proper working of the clause. He did not wish to pose before their Lordships as being in any way more sympathetic in regard to the horrors of evictions than any other noble Lord then present; but at the same time he could not help saying as a private Englishman who obtained his information from the daily Press that the story of those evictions to a certain extent lowered the pride he felt in being an Englishman. This was not the language of cant; it was a most sincere feeling on his part. As had been stated by many conversant with the question it was only those who lived among the Irish peasantry who could accurately gauge the peasant's affection for the land on which he had been brought up. He would call to his assistance on this point a passage from a speech delivered by the Duke of Argyll, who said—

> "The tenants of Ireland have such a love for their homes that they would submit to anything rather than be detached from the soil on which they live,"

The Bill before their Lordships was directed to the gratification of the passionate devotion which the noble Duke had described in such eloquent language. Their Lordships would, of course, remember the Bessborough Commission, which reported that—

> "The Land Act of 1870 failed to give adequate security, particularly against an increase of rents. Large estates are considerately managed, but on some estates, and some recently acquired, rents have been raised not only beyond the value of the land, but even so as to absorb the tenants' improvements."

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Is the noble Lord quoting from my speech?

LORD SANDHURST: No; from the Report of the Bessborough Commission. The passage I quoted from the noble Duke's speech simply had reference to the love of the Irish for their homes.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: What was the date of my speech?

LORD SANDHURST: August 3, 1889, and the occasion was the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. Their Lordships would remember that 1877 was a bad year, 1878 was worse, and 1879 was declared by the Cowper Commission to be the worst year of the century—1846 alone excepted. Evictions, the average of which had been 500 for five years previous to 1877, increased in number until in the first six months of 1880 they numbered over 1,000. The figures were: For the five years ending 1877, 503; 1878, 743; 1879, 1,908; and to June 20, 1880, 1,073. Now he thought a case had been made out for the adoption of some extraordinary measures on behalf of the evicted tenants against whom everything appeared to have combined. He was almost ashamed to mention these matters before Irish landlords who were perhaps better acquainted than himself with the real state of affairs. [Viscount POWERSCOURT: Hear, hear!] He presumed the noble Lord did not contradict the statement he had made.

*VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT: No; I meant that we were better acquainted with the affairs of Ireland than you are.

LORD SANDHURST said, he was dealing with facts. In the years he had named the potato crop and the turf failed, the tenants lost a great deal of credit with their tradesmen, and at the same time the earnings of those peasants who were in the habit of crossing to England to assist in the ingathering of the harvest there had been materially decreased because of alterations in the system of agriculture. Their Lordships quickly passed a Coercion Bill, sent up from the other House, through which it had been forced by means of the Closure, and the Government now claimed that the present Bill was quite as important in the interests of peace and order as any Coercion Bill, and ought therefore to be allowed to go through. The Duke of Argyll, when speaking on the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, remarked that it was introduced at a time when Ireland had been the victim of the most unprincipled agitation which had ever vexed the melancholy ocean of Irish politics. But the situation to-day had vastly changed. Ireland was perfectly tranquil, and if ever there was an occasion when the hand of conciliation should be held out in the interests of peace it was the present. He did, therefore, suggest to their Lordships—although he feared it was fruitless to do so—that it would be a pity to lose this golden opportunity of settling a difficult question.

THE EARL OF KILMOREY said, that, as an owner of Irish estates, and as one intimately connected with and interested in Irish politics, he asked leave to utter a few words in support of the Motion of the noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill. He listened on the previous night with great interest and not a little surprise to the speech delivered by the noble Lord on the Government Bench, who speaking, he presumed, for his friends as well as himself, attempted to blame the Conservatives and Liberal Unionists because no compromise had been arrived at. The point in dispute between the Opposition and the Government was one not of detail, but of principle. What had happened during the last few weeks? It was reported—and the report had not been contradicted—that many attempts had been made to create a *modus vivendi*, and if they had failed, the fault rested with the Government and not with the Opposition. He could not admit that the speeches of the Opposition breathed hostility root and branch to the principle as well as the details of the Bill. What the Opposition were opposed to was the proposed glorification of well-known evil-doers, to the reinstatement of men who could pay, but would not pay their rents, and to the insistence on a compulsory instead of a voluntary power. Those who alleged that the Unionist Party were actuated by motives such as had been suggested were grievously mistaken, for they were as anxious as the Government to bring these troubles to a happy conclusion. They were just as full of the milk of human kindness as the Government, but the Unionist Party were just before being generous, and they very properly insisted that the scheme should be made a voluntary and not a compulsory one. An important fact to keep before the country was that all attempts at compromise had been refused by the Government and by the Leaders of the Nationalist Party in another place. Rather than be baulked of the theatrical display which they had in view—marching their ragged ruffians home with flags flying, and brass bands playing Nationalist or rebel airs, they were determined to accept no compromise whatever, and therefore it was the fault of the leaders of the tenants that these unfortunate outcasts would again be left on the hill-side. Of course their Lordships would be blamed for that; it would be said all along the country side that it was their fault that these men were left to starve; but, as they knew, it was not true, and those whose opinions they most valued would never for a moment listen to such a base unfounded accusation. The noble Earl who introduced the Bill on the previous night said that a voluntary arrangement might do a great deal towards settling this question, but at the same time said they must be assured that both parties to the contract would loyally carry it out. On that point he agreed with his noble Friend, but he ventured to add that if either party showed disloyalty to any such contract it would not be the landlord party. A noble Lord opposite (Lord Tweedmouth) read their Lordships a severe lecture, which culminated in something approaching threatening language, such as they were accustomed to hear from the noble Lord's Nationalist and Radical friends. He spoke of this as a landlords' House, or a House of landlords, and added that they did not constitute a fit and proper tribunal to adjudicate upon this question. But if they were not able to adjudicate, who on earth was? Was being the owner of a racehorse a bar to being a member of the Jockey Club? Was the ownership of a yacht a bar to serving on the committee of the Royal Yacht Squadron? How was the Council of the Royal Agricultural Society constituted? Was it not made up of men intimately connected with farming pursuits, both practically and theoretically? Were there not in that House a certain number of men who for many years past had paid the closest attention to all matters connected with Irish land and politics, and if they were not qualified now to give an opinion, who on earth, he again asked, was? He left it to others to inform the noble Lord what was the sense of the House in regard to his speech. The sneer he levelled at them was not worthy of him, for he knew there were scores and hundreds of men in the House who, quite as much as Members of the House of Commons, had been in the habit of associating with different classes and different men, and had obtained thereby a personal knowledge of their wants. What were they asked to do by the Government? In the first place, they were asked to pass a measure such as had never before been seen, a measure which put a premium on the successful evasion of acknowledged liabilities. This measure levelled an undeserved insult at those men who had preferred loyalty and honesty to rebellion and fraud. At the same time, their Lordships were invited to set aside and overrule judicial decisions by giving unlimited power into the hands of an amateur triumvirate, who would confiscate property without confiscation, and distribute an enormous amount of money to undeserving persons, entirely forgetful of the claims of those who were much more entitled to it. What would the noble Lord or his friends opposite say if his or their tenantry were to rise suddenly, and because of some disagreement on a political point call upon them to surrender their ownerships, and with cynical insolence state that they would pay their rents into the war chest until their claims had been conceded? The Lord Chamberlain was well qualified to give an opinion on matters connected with landed estate management; he was well-known, too, for his great generosity and his great ability in the direction of affairs; he bore a high character both for justice and common-sense. What would he say if a Plan of Campaign were brought home to him with such practical ferocity? Surely he and his friends would do exactly as the Irish landlords did. They looked on the situation at first with astonishment; then they sought to temporise and to induce the men to listen to reason, and when the limits of patience and forbearance were reached, they declared that they would have no more nonsense, and the tenants must either pay or go. That was exactly what had happened on estates in Ireland. He would ask the noble Lord one more question as to what he would do under similar circumstances? Would he, at the expiration of two years, reinstate those who had deserted him, and turn out the honest men who at his invitation had taken the farm, much to his emolument? Surely he would not be human if he submitted his cheek to be smitten in such a way. Only an angel dressed in Peer's robes could do that. And yet the House was asked to grant £250,000 in order to subsidise the men who deliberately broke the law and gloried in doing it at the time. Surely there were Irishmen much more deserving of this money. If any class deserved sympathy they were the brave fellows who had paid rent in troublous times, not those who had slunk away like curs and had repudiated their liabilities. The men deliberately broke the law, and he was in a position to say that the honest class of tenants in Ireland were not in sympathy with those who were called the evicted tenants. It was their duty to make that fact known to the country. It was false to say that the agricultural population of Ireland had any great feeling of sympathy for these tenants, and it was equally false to assert that if their Lordships rejected this Bill there would be a recurrence of crime and disorder in that country. But even if it did break out, he presumed that they might look to Ministers to repress anything of the kind and to preserve order. This was not the first time that their Lordships had been told to accept a bare majority in another place as an infallible indication of public opinion. This Bill, which reflected so little credit on the Government proposing it, was no doubt passed in the House of Commons by a majority of 32; but if they eliminated from that majority the votes of the Nationalist Members, on which side then was the expression of public opinion? It was, moreover, admitted that on this, as on a former occasion, a certain number of the Members of the Liberal and Radical Party supported the Government contrary to their private feeling and convictions, but confident that their Lordships would throw it out. That had been stated, and it had never, so far as he knew, been contradicted. They were like Mr. Bernal Osborne, who once, after almost annihilating a Bill before the House of Commons, turned round to his revered chief, and promised his vote in support of the measure because he said he did not mind "helping a lame dog over a stile." This Bill had been brought forward on the score of urgency—urgency, he presumed, for the preservation of peace; but he would tell their Lordships that, as far as the agricultural population of Ireland was concerned, there was no urgency at all. The urgency was felt in another place by Her Majesty's Ministers, who held Office by the sufferance of men who for years had made it their boast that they had made the government of Ireland impossible. These were the men who did their best to destroy the innumurable benefits of the Union, which, it was their hope, would be perpetuated instead of being broken. The Prime Minister, on his assumption of Office, elected to submit the Home Rule Bill, the legacy of his eminent predecessor, to the country's decision. He hoped the same course would be taken with regard to this Bill, for there was no doubt what the decision of the country would be. In rejecting the Bill without hesitation their Lordships would not only be doing what they thought to be right, but they would be expressing the sentiments of the country at large by refusing to place on the Statute Book of the realm an Act which they considered to be bad from beginning to end.

*VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT said, he was sure no man in the House could be more willing than he as an Irish landlord to reinstate the evicted tenants if it could be done on fair terms. But the terms offered by the Bill were not fair, because although no doubt the tenants' rights were strong, the policy of the Bill seemed such that the landlords' rights were ignored altogether. He for one could not see how, under a compulsory Bill, justice could be done. He was sorry if the door to compromise was closed, but the want of desire for compromise belonged to Her Majesty's Government. What had been going on quite lately? The Committee to inquire into the working of the Irish Land Acts had been sitting, and while the evidence of the tenants had in every case been heard that of the landlords had been refused. The noble Earl who moved the Second Reading had spoken of the Irish landlords in terms which he could not allow to pass without challenge. The noble Lord said that they had never spent money on their estates. He knew one noble Lord in the House who had spent nearly £40,000 in building houses and improving farms within the last 20 years, and he himself, although he had no desire to speak about himself personally, had spent quite as much on his own property. Every landlord of common sense would seek to improve his own estate by raising the status of his tenants. He was informed by those who knew, by solicitors and land agents in

Dublin, that if this Bill passed the only remedy which the landlord would have for the non-payment of rent would be distraint. The process meant selling the stock at a ruinous price, and ruining the tenant as well as the landlord. The landlord would, further, be subject to all sorts of actions for illegal distraint. Surely the only corollary of this Bill would be one to prevent eviction altogether. In England, in towns as well as in country, evictions for the recovery of rent were of daily occurrence. Why should the Irish landlord alone be prohibited from recovering rent by eviction? The noble Earl in saying that the Irish landlords had spent no money on their estates——

EARL SPENCER: I never said that at all.

***VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT**: You said something very like it.

EARL SPENCER: I deny that I said anything of the sort. Once or twice something I said has been referred to as an attack on Irish landlords. If I did attack them—as I am sure I did not—it was not my intention in any way to be unjust to them. I have always said that a very large body of Irish landlords have been perfectly fair and equitable in their treatment of their tenants; but that there was a residue who unfortunately have not acted in that way.

***VISCOUNT POWERSCOURT** said, the Irish landlords had borrowed enormous sums from the Board of Works entirely for the benefit of their tenants, and he only wished to add that they had acted in quite as generous and liberal a way as the landlords of England and Scotland.

THE MARQUESS OF CLANRICARDE said, that he had endeavoured to ascertain what were the claims of the evicted tenants to the enormous advantages which were accorded to them and which no other class in the world possessed, and he had found great difficulty in discovering them. He turned to the statistics which he had of one of the Campaign estates—an estate of which he knew something — and he found directly abundant evidence that the claims were distinctly in most cases very, very doubtful. These statistics, which happened to be of his own estate, were not furnished to him as a weapon against this Bill. They were dated 1891 and 1892. They were sent to him to enable him as the landowner to see how many of the evicted Campaigners it would be possible safely to put back. He found some rather peculiar and notable results. Of these evicted Campaigners 59 not only wished and asked to be evicted, but insisted on being evicted. They would go. They, many of them, confessed that they were able to pay, and many admitted that they wished to be turned out so that they might live on the Plan of Campaign. Fifty-four asked to be put back, and were put back, and that was evidence—though he did not say absolute proof—that the owner was not a non-possumist, if he might use the term. Among the lists—there were two estates kept separately—he found an accidental sequence of eight tenants who all insisted on going. They owed from 6½ to 10 years' rent, which was more than 20 per cent. below the Government valuation, the valuation being £39 15s. and the rent £30 15s. The lists showed, Mr. Sexton notwithstanding, that the 92 Campaigners owed 471 years' rent, fully five years per head. Further, Mr. William O'Brien notwithstanding, three-fourths of the whole lot were not evicted until the latter half of 1889, long after the date that he said they had all been evicted, much more than two years after the baptism of the Plan of Campaign. A further supplement showed that 41 new tenants, or planters, all consented to pay slightly more than the full total which the ex-tenants would not pay. Among these was one case cited by Mr. Dillon, who contended that the so-called planters were in fact bogus tenants, and that one of them who had taken five farms of his (Lord Clanricarde's) had been unable to settle with the landlord, and consequently had disposed of the tenancy to an ex-Campaigner. Mr. Dillon added that he (Lord Clanricarde) was quite capable of keeping on the planters in order to force the combination maliciously. Mr. Dillon, this obliging personality, was not worth notice, but he (Lord Clanricarde) followed the facts to confute his distortion of them. That planter had been shown not to have been a bogus tenant and not to have been in difficulties by the simple fact that he did settle with his landlord until he (the planter) died, and then his legatee paid the balance. It was not the planter, but the evicted Campaigner who began the barter for the tenancy by the offer of £100, and who ultimately offered £300, which showed that the holding was so low let as to be worth a good sum of money. Ultimately the matter collapsed over some details, so that he need not discuss whether he would or would not give the tenancy to the ex-Campaigner. But he would point out how under this Bill this Dillon hypothesis would work. The Campaigner owed the landlord £75 on eviction. That he was willing now to pay; he admitted that it was justly due, and in his own words it was a "debt of conscience." By this Bill, on Mr. Dillon's hypothesis, the owner would be compelled to put back the Campaigner, who would have to pay not the owner the £75, but £125 to somebody else, an outsider to whom nothing was due, and who was not the owner. That was absurd—almost as good as a play. Lastly, the statistics showed that the whole rent of the farms still on hand on his Campaign estates was 15 per cent. below the Government valuation. That was evidence—he would not say proof—that the farms were low-let, and there was no excessive demand on the part of the owner of the land. One other cognate point—as to the antecedents of these Campaigners. Were they such as to preclude the assumption that they would not make unsuitable tenants? He would refer to the cases of two of these evicted tenants. P. McDermott was one of them. He had heard him quoted as "the infernal machine man," because when evicted, owing 4½ years' rent, an infernal machine of the worst kind was found attached to his door which only missed blowing everyone to bits by the mere chance of the lock being picked and not forced. That man's rent was 27 per cent. below the Government valuation. The rent was £47, and the valuation £65 for the land alone. He was evicted for £89 after four years' hard campaigning, and refusing any payment on account on an abatement of 20 and 25 per cent. Before the Court of Investigation he would give no information, and before the Mathew Commission he illustrated that systematic concealment of important facts which marked that unlimited Liability Company. He was asked—Question 6827, he thought—why he had been summoned before the Court, and his answer was that it was in consequence of some infernal machine alleged to have been found on the farm of an evicted tenant. No one would guess from that that he himself was the evicted tenant. That was an important point. Obviously the law-abiding landowner preferred that this man should take himself and his infernal machine, in constitutional language, to "another place." His only other case was an eviction on another farm on which occurred one of the worst attempts at murder known in the country by a gang of men. A manager was wounded and the horse of the police guard was killed by a bullet from a volley fired in broad daylight on the Queen's highway. One of the gang was afterwards sheltered in the house of the tenant to whom he was referring. This man also would give no information. Were the landlords to take such men as these back again? There must be a limit. Some of these men who were Campaigners and were evicted were known to the police as suspects of the worst kind. A number of them did their worst to force on civil war, such was the combined violence of their opposition to the execution of the law. It was done to hamper the Government, but for the Campaigners the worst tactical blunder was that which disqualified them from any future tenancy. They themselves shut the door in their own faces. On the other hand, a number of those who quietly gave up possession were, in consequence, put back.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the time has come when it is my duty, on behalf of my friends behind me, to sum up what has passed in this Debate, but I own it is a duty which I look forward to with apprehension, and difficult to perform on account of the extreme meagreness of the arguments in favour of the Bill with which I shall have to deal. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was principally occupied in variations of different kinds upon the old tune of *tu quoque*. Something that somebody had said or done at a previous period appeared to him to be a sufficient justification in the eyes of Parliament and of the public of principles and provisions which might be objected to in this Bill. Does the noble and learned Lord seriously believe that the English people will take a bad Bill more willingly from the present Government because it is proved—if it can be proved, which I deny—that some previous Government produced something equally bad? Such arguments appear to be entirely irrelevant, and I shall not follow the noble and learned Lord in that line. But I will notice one reference which he made to our conduct, to our present and recent conduct, because he did me the honour to appeal to myself immediately. The noble and learned Lord dwelt with extreme eloquence upon the sufferings of the tenants who have been evicted in Ireland, and many other noble Lords have done the same. The idea that appeared to fill their minds was that we were all destitute of any compassion or sympathy for misfortune, and only animated by a vindictive feeling against those who had broken the law. I defy him to find in the speeches of any representative men on our side in either House of Parliament any justification for that view. We have always desired that compassion and mercy should be exercised as far as possible. We have wished that this Bill should assume a compassionate form in which it was possible for us to concur with the Government in relieving those who had, perhaps unjustly, suffered, in mitigating the sufferings and punishment of others, perhaps the large majority, whose real offence was that they had been duped by men more practised and less scrupulous than themselves. And even if such a measure had in its effect relieved the punishment due to men for whom little extenuation could have been said, we would willingly have accepted a provision of that merciful kind in view of the general duties of rulers to exercise mercy, and the special duty of doing it where bitter feelings have to be healed, and the remembrance of past contests have to be effaced. But we must do it without sacrificing the rights of others or injuring innocent persons. We cannot consent to do what is called healing a sore and conjuring danger by flinging to these evicted tenants another slice of the attenuated rights of Irish landlords. The noble and learned Lord seemed to me to flinch from discussing that which is the central point of the Bill—namely, the power and position of these Arbitrators. The peculiarity of the Bill is the enormous power, the unprecedented power, which is given to three men over the property and rights of a large body of Irish landlords. To refuse to discuss the constitution and character of the arbitration is to flinch from dealing with the most essential part of the Bill. Arbitration is a sort of despotism. It is a little bit of despotism. Like many other great poisons, despotism, if taken in very small doses, and with very great precautions, is a wholesome medicine, and that is the case with arbitration; but then it does not follow, because you take it in certain cases, with careful precautions against its abuse, that therefore you are entitled without restraint and without guidance to fling down before the feet of any arbitrators who may be chosen the rights of men to be dealt with in an undefined manner according to no standard and under the guidance and protection of no law. The arbitration of these gentlemen is wanting in the most essential characteristics of arbitration. The noble Lord the Privy Seal appeared to imagine that all that was wanting to secure the success of the experiment was to give the Arbitrators a free hand. But arbitration, to be satisfactory and effectual, must satisfy two conditions: The Arbitrators must be acceptable to the persons over whom they are to arbitrate, and they must be impartial men. Neither of these conditions is satisfied in the case of the present Arbitrators. They are notoriously imposed by force upon the landlords of Ireland. They would be utterly unsatisfactory to them, and they are not impartial men. I do not wish to say a word that can hurt the feelings of these three gentlemen or can cast a slur upon them. I am ready to attribute to them all capacities and all virtues. But when I say that they—or rather the two of them who form the majority—are not impartial; that in the conflict which divides every home and almost every family in Ireland, they have a distinct bias, I am only asserting of them that what I am afraid is true of all Irishmen, or very nearly every Irishman, and it certainly casts no slur whatever upon their honour or their character. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty spoke highly of the character and capacity of these Arbitrators. I think he must have forgotten the time when we were discussing in this House the strange proceedings of Mr. Fottrell, who was the old solicitor to the Land League, and who, after he was solicitor to the Land League, was made solicitor to some Government Department, and in that character published and circulated, through the machinery of the Government Department, a pamphlet praising the language and character and maintaining the doctrines of Michael Davitt. Well, Mr. Fottrell is a tenants' man. He is not a worse man for that. We must all have our opinions, and he has his. But he is not impartial. He may have every virtue, but he is not impartial. With respect to Mr. Greer, I believe him to be a very learned and a very able man, and I again disclaim most earnestly any wish to say anything that can be wounding to his feelings ; but it is a matter of fact that he has been giving evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons during this summer, and that he has given evidence in the strongest way upon all the burning questions that are at issue between landlord and tenant ; he has given evidence in favour of the tenant. Again it is no disgrace to him. We must all take our sides. But he is not an impartial man. And to give these enormous powers over the landlords of Ireland to two men who are not impartial is entirely to misconceive the nature and the character of the functions of arbitration, and to convert it into the worst of despotisms. It is no use to tell me that these Arbitrators will often perform justice, and that they are very excellent men. The men who sat in the Star Chamber were very excellent men, and they very often performed justice. They did not cut everybody's ears off. But still we have all had since that time a very righteous horror of abandoning without restraint, without law, without guidances—abandoning to Judges, however eminent, unrestricted power over the rights and liberties of their fellow-men. I daresay many of the men of the Revolutionary Tribunal were very excellent, and they certainly possessed that one characteristic which the noble Lord the Privy Seal desires, they had a free hand. The Sultan of Morocco, the Sultan of Turkey, and the Shah of Persia all have a free hand. I do not wish to say a word that would injure the feelings of these potentates. I desire to attribute to them, as I do to the Arbitrators, all capacities and all virtues, but I say they would not be impartial Arbitrators ; and nothing is more astonishing or painful to me than the way in which numbers of politicians, many of them belonging to schools that affect a special guardianship over the liberty of mankind, are willing, for the slightest Parliamentary or political object, to hand over the property and the rights of their fellowmen to the unrestricted and unguided power of persons who certainly have no special attribute of impartiality to commend them to such a tremendous office. Another very interesting thing—a matter that has appeared to me to reveal itself in this Debate—is the development, if I may use a slang word, the evolution, which is taking place in the landlord, or rather the landlord of popular apprehension. In my youth the landlord was rather a respectable person ; he was admired, and people were willing to think well of him rather than ill. As I grew older the balance seemed to me to incline until at last there was a little doubt about a landlord, but still he was recognised as a human being who had the same claims to justice as any other man, and to whom, however, unwillingly the rights of British citizenship should be freely accorded. But we are advancing beyond that. The landlord is assuming the position of the Jew of the Middle Ages or the pariah of India. He is an outcast. He is a man for whom we may have compassion and sympathy, but who has no rights. Look at this Bill. If an old tenant wants to be reinstated, and there is a new tenant or planter in his place, that planter's consent must be obtained before the process can be completed. I admit that in saying so I am speaking merely technically. We all know how that planter's consent will be obtained. It will be obtained by the operation of rural public opinion, and the manner by which rural public opinion operates is to drag a man out of his bed and shoot at his legs. But still, technically, and setting aside that material qualification, the planter is in the position of having the veto upon the operation. And what is the condition of the landlord ? He has no veto at all. If it is proved that he is in possession, the operation must go on, whatever his feelings may be ; and I do not know that it has occurred to your Lordships to notice that the 15 years which may have elapsed since the tenant to be reinstated was evicted is larger than the period of prescription which is now by the English law sufficient to ensure another man's land to any man who occupies it. So that if a landlord went for another man's land, and occupied it for 12 years, he would be absolutely safe against anything anybody could say, but if he is impertinent enough to remain on his own land he is turned out. And so keen is the jealously of this new law lest the landlord should enjoy his own, that if there is any suspicion that the planter is not what they call a *bonâ fide* tenant—I do not know what a *bonâ fide* tenant is; it may be that he is like a *bonâ fide* traveller, subject to considerable doubt—the law will hunt the tenant and landlord out alike. The landlord must not attempt by these clandestine subterfuges to go in and enjoy his own. If it can be proved by any process, however indirect, that the result of leaving the planter on the land is that the landlord will still enjoy it, the new law is equally merciless to the landlord and to the planter both. It goes so far that, if there is a bit of land of which a planter has half and the landlord has half, special machinery is put into the Bill to prevent the landlord, as it were, skulking behind the planter to enjoy his half of the land on the strength of the planter's title. Now you see the real position which the landlord occupies in the eyes of the Liberal Government. This is the evolution of the landlord's position, and so much has this legislation affected noble Lords that the tone which has pervaded the speeches of the Lord Privy Seal and of the Lord Chancellor is that eviction is a positive crime. If they can say that a man has secured the payment of the rents that are due to him by the process offered by the law, that is a crime so heinous as to justify the enactment of special provisions to his disadvantage. Of course, Her Majesty's Government and those who follow them have considered the effects of this policy, and, no doubt, would not object to any obvious results that it might effect. They will follow the last landlord, or landlord's right, to the grave with a dry eye. But I want them to consider that—by that mysterious inter-connection which brings together all human actions and all human procedure, and forces the human mind that has once given way to a particular set of motives to give way to them again on any analogous occasion—other contracts besides those of land will be subjected to the same idea. The feeling will very soon spread that anybody who has a right to anything, and who uses any process of the law to recover it, is liable to the thunders that are pronounced against the evictor and the land-grabber. "Base is the slave that pays!" That is the philosophy of the future. I know that the Lord Chancellor and many others take refuge behind the belief that this is only an exceptional act of legislation and an exceptional outburst of sympathy and pity; that it will not count in the future; that nobody will think of it when this time is past. We have heard a great deal of exceptional legislation in our time, and by this time we know what it means. When the Irish Church was abolished we were told that it was purely an exceptional Act, and could not affect any other Church. But already the Church of England in Wales and the Scottish Church are formally threatened, and not obscure preparations are going on against the English Church. Later on we had the Irish Land Bill, and again we were told that it was a thoroughly exceptional measure; that there was something so thoroughly exceptional in Irish affairs, and Irish proclivities, and in the Irish people, that it need not be feared that the special indulgence given to them would ever spread to the advantage of any other class in any other part of the country. Already that law has found its way to the crofters of Scotland, and is demanded by the farmers of Wales, while I have heard suggestions of applying it to the farmers of England. So matters go on. You cannot make exceptions. It is not within human ingenuity to make exceptions on a great subject where human passions are concerned and great prizes are offered to the greed of large bodies of men. You cannot make exception in favour of any particular act of legislation in departures from the principles on which your law reposes and say, "For the future this will not count." You may be perfectly sincere in desiring that exception; but human nature would overrule any precautions and any protests that they might make, and the sin against principle which you commit will come up against you whether you like it or not on some other subject more or less germain to that with which you have been dealing. Nothing has struck me more than the refusal of the Government to look to the future. Over and over again they have been asked what the effect of this legislation will be, and how they intend that the social machinery of Ireland shall go on in future, and they always shrink from the challenge and refuse to tell us how they are to prevent the example from spreading to other cases and affecting other bodies of men. The tenants who have not refused to pay will see that they took the wrong side, and that they would be in a better position had they refused to pay. But they will not make the same mistake a second time. There are purchases of land which are making Great Britain—as, I think, Mr. Chamberlain said—the largest landowner in Ireland. What motive will the tenants have for paying their instalments? Up to this time they have had before them the fear of the law and the penalty of eviction. They will now know that, however definite the provisions of the law may be, however clear the rights of the landlord may be, if a proper crisis in political events is taken, if the proper machinery of agitation and pressure is applied to the House of Commons, the penalties which the law threatens for non-payment will not be inflicted, and that they can safely dare all the threats and all the danger which a refusal to pay their just debts has up to this time subjected them to. Where is your security for the payment of their instalments by the men who have purchased with loans from the State? What chance is there of purchase going on if this Bill passes and all security is broken and contracts made worthless and the legal remedy for the breach of contract is covered with disrepute? And if purchase is discouraged or prevented, what hope is there of any real or permanent or friendly settlement of the agrarian dispute which for so many centuries has exercised the soul of Ireland? Now there is another class of people whose case I have not heard mentioned. This Bill begins—

> "If, in the opinion of the Arbitrators, the Petition shows that the landlord is or was on April 19, 1894, in occupation of the holding."

How about evictions that took place on April 20, 1894, and subsequently? Curiously enough, a Paper was circulated this morning showing how many evictions there have been during the last three months in Ireland, about the time that has elapsed since the date mentioned here. There have, in that time, been 1,770 evictions, but the men evicted will get no relief whatever from this Bill. There have been 1,770 evictions, nearly half the number of men whose sufferings and sorrows you say require the passing of this Bill. These 1,770 men will see themselves evicted without any relief whatever from this Bill. The man evicted on April 17th will be restored, but the man evicted on April 20th will be in a hopeless condition. Do you imagine that such a peculiar way of exercising justice is likely to secure peace and quietness in Ireland? We are told that one tenant cannot bear that another tenant should sit at a lighter rent than his, and that if it is done there must be disturbance; but if a tenant sees that a difference of three days in the date of his eviction means all the difference between reinstatement and ruin, you may be certain that there will still be a sore and a danger. You may be certain that in these circumstances you will be told again in another year that the condition of the evicted tenants still presents a serious difficulty in Ireland. What are the Government going to do? Are they going to bring in an annual measure? Will there be a provision in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill every year for the reinstatement of the tenants who have been evicted during the year? How are you going to deal with this case and the case of the new tenants? Believe me you cannot make distinction where no distinction naturally exists; your want of logic will always be found out by the keen eyes of human greed and interest, and you will be forced to go further and further down on the dangerous path upon which, in order to meet a temporary political emergency, you have entered. The noble Lord the Privy Seal (Lord Tweedmouth) addressed a good deal of wholesome advice to the House last night. I observe that this propensity is often found in new Members who come to us from the House of Commons. The noble and learned Lord has been a long time on the Woolsack and has nearly worn the propensity out, but he nevertheless talked to us a little about the stability of this House being involved in its treatment of his advice. The noble Lord the Privy Seal was much more frank, and addressed us in the fresh and keen language to which he has been accustomed in another place, speaking constitutionally. The noble and learned Lord—I beg his pardon, he is not learned—said—

> "He regretted greatly the attitude which their Lordships had taken up with regard to this Bill. They did not form the best tribunal to deal with a question of this kind."

Of course, that only meant that he was in a minority. He went on to say—

> "They were, in the first place, a House of landlords."

I am entitled to differ from the noble Lord as to the matter of fact. I know a great many Members of this House who in no sense can be called Members of a House of landlords. They may possess a certain amount of land, but I submit that every kind of eminence and every kind of property has a large representation in this House. In the second place, the noble Lord said—

> "It was a dangerous thing in these days for a special body of men to decide a great question when they were not in constant and daily contact with the general mass of the electorate."

I confess to a slight feeling of pity for any person who is in general contact with the general mass of the electors, because it would involve an amount of personal exertion which not anyone could get through. The noble Lord's words mean that it is a dangerous thing for us to decide anything, and the noble Lord's view is that we should decide no great questions. I do not suppose he willingly came across the interval that divides the two Houses, but it is very kind of him on crossing the Central Hall to bring with him for our improvement and enlightment the result of his meditations elsewhere upon our fate. The advice of the noble Lord who has conveyed to us that the atmosphere of this House, the *genus loci*, oppresses him, will in future have greater effect on our minds if he does not accompany it with bluster which nobody regards and with menaces which everybody knows to be hollow. He deliberately told your Lordships that, in his judgment, in rejecting this Bill we were making a great mistake which we would live to rue. Our living to rue it is, of course, a question of prophecy upon which one man's opinion is as good as another's. If I look to the past I quite admit that second Chambers are not immortal. I see that in France six or, I think, seven second Chambers have disappeared in the course of this century; but I observe also that in every case the popular assembly that sat with the second Chamber disappeared at the same time. If the noble Lord will carry his historical recollection back he will, I think, find that what happened 250 years ago does not differ very much in its indications from the examples that I have cited. Your Lordships will remember in *Quentin Durward*, when Louis XI., intending evil to Martius Caleotti, his astronomer, asks him to prophesy when he, the astronomer, would die, the reply of the astronomer was—

> "I cannot tell that with respect directly to myself; I can only tell with reference to another; but I shall die three days before Your Majesty."

If the noble Lord insists on my casting the horoscope of this House, I say it will perish a few months before the House of Commons. But I have noticed these observations of the noble Lord not for the purpose of bandying prophecies with him as to the probable duration of this House, which is an exceedingly unprofitable occupation, but for the purpose of entreating him to abandon a style of argument which I am sure must be most repulsive to his own nature, and which he can only have adopted from somewhat underrating ours. Surely it does not make any difference in our duty whether we are likely to lengthen or to abbreviate the existence of this House. The institutions of this country and the traditions of centuries have left a great power in our hands. Whether it is abstractedly the best or not is no matter or question for us in the exercise of our duty to judge. It is our business to perform a duty that has been placed in our hands according to our conscience. It is our business to resist dangerous measures which we think have, under a delusion and with insufficient motives, been accepted by the other House of Parliament, and that duty does not become less when we observe that if Great Britain had voted alone this measure would not have crossed this Hall. But the duty is one that we shall not exercise with the less earnestness or the less consciousness of right when we consider the peculiar Parliamentary condition to which it owes its origin. You tell us it was urgent; you tell us that the sufferings of these men on the hillside have moved your hearts, so that you could not stop; and you are bound even now at this time of the year, suppressing the privileges of the House of Commons, to try to force this measure through Parliament. What have you been doing for two years? During the two years you have been in power the sufferings of these men have been as keen as they are now. Their claim on your compassion and on your sympathy has been as great, and they had not less right than now, if they had any rights at all. You might even have pushed aside the Home Rule Bill for the purpose without any great extravagance if your sympathies were so greatly moved. But even treating that as an impossible sacrifice, was the Employers' Liability Bill or the Parish Councils Bill a matter of such supreme importance that the agonising sufferings of these heroic men could not induce you to give a few of those weeks that were abandoned on very unsatisfactory measures to the salvation and the rescue of these men? There was no urgency at all; the urgency was Parliamentary. The Budget had to be got through, a dangerous and difficult Budget. It wanted votes; those votes were for a price; they were given on the condition that a particular Bill should be offered to the Representatives of the constituencies of the South and East of Ireland. It is a process of log-rolling which has eaten so far into the purity of our Constitution, which is hastening every year the time when Parliament will be no longer looked up to in any part of the country as an impartial arbiter of the destinies of the nation. I hope that is an evil peculiar to a passing crisis, and when we have surmounted that crisis it will pass away. But be that as it may, there can be no contingency that calls more loudly for the exercise of the ancient powers of this House than an occasion when the House of Commons, yielding to these inferior, secondary motives, has passed a Bill which digs at the root of all society, makes contracts hopeless, and prosperity impossible.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: It will not be my duty to intrude long on your attention to-night. ["Hear, hear!"] I am glad to hear that cheer from the noble Lord on the Cross Benches. Indeed, so far as my knowledge of Irish questions is specially concerned, I, for one, should not care to intervene in this Debate at all were it not that I hold a high and responsible position unworthily—possibly, as the noble Duke has so kindly stated, very inadequately and temporarily. But, still, I hold it; and it is my duty, as it would be the duty of the noble Marquess to take, as I take, a most serious and responsible view of this matter, and not as he has thought fit to take and view this matter, as a subject for gibes at the cruel sufferings of those who have been moonlighted in Ireland, and in other respects. I am in the recollection of the House. The noble Marquess, amid the laughter of his own side, called attention to what was the effect of rural opinion, saying that it meant a man being dragged out of his bed and having his legs shot. It is, therefore, I say incumbent on someone on these Benches to come forward and take a more responsible and serious view of the subject than the noble Marquess has thought fit to take. One point which has struck me more than another in the course of this long Debate is this—the hothouse atmosphere in which we live. I do not desire to associate myself too much with the breezy language of my noble Friend the Lord Privy Seal, who spoke with a raciness with which I cannot compete, and which I freely admit belongs rather more nearly to the other House of Parliament than to this. But I do associate myself entirely with the sentiment of his, that it is impossible for a Legislative Assembly in these days to conduct discussions on matters of high Imperial importance, vital to the peasantry and to the landlords in any part of this island, without some more immediate contact with the constituencies than your Lordships have. I will not follow my noble Friend in the language which has been described as the language of menace. Neither will I follow the noble Marquess in the language which I may characterise as the language of contempt which he has addressed to the other House of Parliament. The noble Marquess lamented any necessity for contact with the constituencies at all. [*Cries of* "No!"]

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I said it would be a very disagreeable thing to have a constant general contact with the whole of the electorate, because of the labour which would be constantly imposed.

The Earl of ROSEBERY : That labour exists already. It is long since the noble Marquess left the House of Commons, and times have changed.

The Marquess of SALISBURY : Nobody in the House of Commons has contact with the whole of the electorate.

The Earl of ROSEBERY : The 670 Members jointly have a constant and immediate contact with the whole of the electorate. Anyone travelling 365 days in the year and visiting two constituencies a day, would only just be able to visit the whole of the constituencies in the country, and therefore I put myself in the hands of the House. I cannot presume that the noble Marquess would attribute such an idiotic performance to any Member either of this House or of the other, and therefore he was in reality pouring deliberate contempt upon the idea of your Lordships having any more immediate and constant contact with the constituencies than you have at present. There was one speech which, it seemed, amused the noble Marquess. But I am not sure that his supporters will be so amused when they read it to-morrow morning. There was one speech preceded that of the noble Marquess, and which showed me, and I confess with surprise to me, more acutely even than his own, in what a hothouse atmosphere we live in this House. It was with surprise that I heard the noble Marquess, who sits as a supporter of the noble Duke, excite the merriment of your Lordships by a recital of the proceedings on his estate. He said it was as good as a play. If so, then that play is a tragedy. We have been frequently asked by the occupants of the opposite Bench, what is the meaning of the Arbitrators of this tribunal having a special reference to the circumstances in any particular district? I should not have mentioned the noble Marquess had he not chosen to mention himself. But he is one of the cases that we had in our eye in framing that clause. And though the speech may have moved the merriment of your Lordships to hear what the circumstances of that estate are, it might not altogether so move the ratepayer or the taxpayer in connection with that district, when they remember that his evictions have already cost the ratepayer and taxpayer some £23,000, and that between 20 and 30 of his tenants are under police protection at this moment. When he comes down to this House to make a joke and a jest of circumstances of this kind he mistakes, as I believe, the character of your Lordships' House; and at any rate, if he does not mistake your Lordships' character, he mistakes the character of the question before us. The noble Marquess opposite, in his remarks to-night, has shown no consciousness whatever that there is any question at all to be dealt with. He has passed his quips and cranks, and no one could have enjoyed them more than I should have done had they been on a subject of less immediate urgency and importance. He has passed his quips and his cranks round and round the Bill. He has touched on various details connected with the Bill. But I ask your Lordships whether anyone listening to his speech to-night could have believed that, in the opinion of himself or his supporters, there is a question to be dealt with of most vital and urgent importance and necessity. It has been acknowledged by Mr. Balfour, and by other authorities who have been cited over and over again. And when the Leader of the House of Commons has acknowledged in the fullest and freest manner that there is a great question for treatment at hand I should hope that the Leader of the House of Lords—for such the noble Marquess is in reality—would not have disdained to admit there was such a thing. We have had the same acknowledgment, strongly put before us by my noble Friend on the Woolsack, from one who is no friend of our Party, Mr. T. W. Russell, whose acquaintance I have not the honour to possess, but who, I understand, was roaming the Lobbies in a state of rebellion for a considerable time when the Amendment against this Bill was to be moved. But, above all, we have had testimony of a kind the most remarkable, in my opinion, from a man whose speech, whatever else may remain of this Debate, will long endure in the annals of Parliament. I allude to the speech of Mr. Courtney. He spoke as an ardent and devoted follower of the noble Duke. He had every pressure of association and circumstance to hold his peace on this subject if he did not agree with his associates. But he made an appeal to Parliament and the House of Commons, and, what I think is more important, he made an appeal to his own Party. He said in effect, "Remember that this is a question which must be dealt with. It is not one which you can quibble with or refine. One Party or the other must deal with it, and deal with it promptly." And yet, in spite of all these witnesses to the truth, the noble Marquess makes a speech in which, I will not say he does not indicate a possibility of compromise, but in which he does not indicate even any necessity for compromise or for legislation at all. I say that that is a somewhat melancholy revelation. He seems to think that we have delayed in this matter. He argues that we might have brought in a Bill last year having a bearing on this matter. We did recommend a Commission, and the Commission sat. But from all that the noble Marquess has said no one could have any idea that that Commission, which is the root, the inception, and the foundation of the legislation which we are recommending to your notice, ever sat at all. In the course of last year we endeavoured to induce your Lordships, and we did induce the House of Commons, to pass an Irish measure which, in our opinion, would have settled this question, and many other questions besides. You chose to reject it in the exercise of a wisdom which I will not question.. But I will question your right, after you have rejected that Bill, and after you have rendered useless the efforts of an entire Session of Parliament, to say that we were indifferent to the evils which eat at the root of the prosperity of Ireland, and that we did not attempt to deal with them in the course of last year. The noble Marquess says we had an autumn Session, and might have dealt with that matter instead of with the Employers' Liability Bill and the Parish Councils Bill. The noble Marquess pays a great deal of attention to Great Britain. I myself have announced—and I do not shrink from a repetition of the statement, for it is not one of the speeches which the Duke of Argyll says I try to wriggle out of—I have announced that I regard England as the predominant partner in the Union, the most important, the most wealthy, and the most populous, and therefore the partner to be specially consulted in matters relating to the partnership. As to laying our Irish policy before an Autumn Session, the only effect of that would be in our opinion to render two Sessions barren instead of one. The Autumn Session was only to give proper time to English and, I am sorry to say, Scotch legislation. We were asked last night—we were not asked, we were told—and when I say that I need hardly add that I refer to the admirable speech of the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll). I will not refer to that admirable speech, because I have heard it often before, because, after all, the speech of the noble Duke only comes to the same strain he always sings, which is "Thank God, I am not as other men are!" He recited that speech with all the melody and all the rhetoric that he has at his command. Nor will I follow him in the discussion of our relative ages. It is not a matter of enormous importance to the world at large or the constituencies of Great Britain in particular, or even the evicted tenants of Ireland, to know that at the time I was born the noble Duke had already addressed his eloquent strains to, I trust, a not unappreciative audience—to the world and myself that is a matter of very little import. All I can hope is that if I live to reach the years of the noble Duke I shall have some share of the vigour and the eloquence with which he still addresses us, and even a greater share of Christian charity towards my neighbour. I say he did not ask; he told us that this Bill came up to this House on no authority at all. I will tell him on what authority it comes up. It comes up on the authority of the Commission appointed last year, and presided over by Mr. Justice Mathew. [*Laughter.*] I did not expect, I confess—though one hears strange things in this House—I did not expect to hear Judges openly laughed at by noble Lords in this House.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: The learned Judge said that he did not act as a Judge on the occasion.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: No Judge can so completely divest himself of his judicial capacity that it is wise or seemly on the part of any body of men to laugh at him when his name is mentioned; but I give my thanks to the noble Lord. I recollect that when the Parnell Commission was appointed the slightest censure on any of the Judges who formed that tribunal, the slightest suspicion as to any judgment, was met with indignant philippics from the other side of the House. This Bill, therefore, comes on the authority of a tribunal which noble Lords may laugh at, but which was, in fact, a tribunal which not even the House of Lords can affect to disregard. What are the principles which the Report lays down? It says that the policy of reinstatement appeared to be clearly sanctioned by the 13th section of the Land Purchase Act of 1891; and it further stated that the condition of affairs by which large tracts of the country were allowed to be idle was most injurious. It then refers to the heavy charges incurred for protecting life and property. It went further—and I recommend this to the attention of the noble Marquess—and it said that these charges might have to be increased. The Report recommended that the Land Commission, or a Special Commission, should be empowered to settle the disputes between the landowners and the evicted tenants. Now, that is the basis of the Bill. I venture to ask any noble Lord here whether he could gather from the speech of the noble Marquess that he took cognisance of these recommendations? The remarkable part of it is that, so far as this remedy, as it is a remedy at all, being ours or that of Mr. Justice Mathew's Commission, the remedy is in apostolic succession to the act of the noble Marquess himself. It is true that the 13th section of the Act of 1891 was a voluntary clause, but the noble Lord is not willing in a voluntary or compulsory form to continue it.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: That is what I thought I indicated very clearly in the opening of my speech—that I was in favour of any measure which was not compulsory.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: What we want is acts, not words. We heard the sympathy of the noble Marquess, as we heard that of the Earl of Kilmorey, who said, I think, the same thing; but we looked for something more than vague expressions of sympathy from the responsible guide and controller of this House. I say, on the basis of the Report of the Commission, and on the authority of the persons I have stated, there is a very grave question to be dealt with, and we have dealt with it on the lines laid down by the Mathew Commission. We cannot, therefore, be said to have acted unadvisedly, and I think we have the right when we find our Bill is to be rejected—not in favour of a voluntary plan, not by a Resolution which holds out any hope of a measure being produced by the noble Marquess, who in his leisure moments amuses his fancy with alien Bills or other subjects that occupy his attention—when our Bill, introduced on the responsibility of the Government, is to be rejected without the slightest alternative, I say we are entitled to consider what is the position of this House and those who form it. I recollect the views of those who have spoken as to a possible remedy, as to what they were disposed to propose. The noble Duke (of Devonshire), who, if he will allow me to say so, made the most powerful speech I have ever heard him make, a speech which I envied him for making as regards its ability, only I wished I could have seen a little more consciousness that there was any interest but the landlord's to be consulted—and what is his remedy? He went off into a line which I could not precisely follow, but there was one distinct recommendation he did make, which was that the 13th section of the Land Purchase Act of 1891 should be continued, and that was the one specific recommendation which the Commissioners, headed by Mr. Justice Mathew, emphatically stated it would be futile to carry out. They say—

> "We see no prospect of useful results from the re-enactment of this section, even without any such limitation of time as it contains."

My noble Friend Lord Lansdowne—the ability of whose speech I also desire to acknowledge—was extremely happy in criticism, but when it came to any suggestion for anything to be done I do not think he was much more hopeful than the noble Duke. What did the noble Marquess say? He said that he was not altogether averse to a Bill of this kind which excluded the principle of compulsion. But what did he go on to say? He said he would be very willing to consider any precise and definite Amendments that we were willing to make with the object of removing compulsion from our Bill if we were prepared to lay them on the Table of the House before the Second Reading was asked for. I have not been long in the position I have the honour to hold, but I do venture to say that no such proposition was ever asked of a responsible Government that they, on their authority and with a full sense of the responsibility which attaches to them, should make a proposition declaring that in their opinion, as we do declare, compulsion is necessary for the more flagrant cases to be dealt with under this Bill, and that then, on the mere *ipse dixit* of one or two Peers, we should, while asking for a Second Reading, be called upon to produce, on the other hand, an alternative Bill, which we should ask the House to pass also. The noble Duke (of Argyll) made a very good point, I thought, about the possibility of a Court sitting in one part of Ireland to fix rents and of another Court sitting in another part of Ireland in order to release persons from the payment of those rents; but I do not think that even that idea would reach the absurdity of a Government coming to Parliament with a Bill to authorise compulsion in one hand, and at the same time another Bill in its hand asking that the element of compulsion should be removed. I do not deny for one moment that there may be flaws in the Bill before the House. I never knew a Bill, and I do not think I ever knew an Irish Bill, in which there were no flaws to be found; and I say an Irish Bill because, after all, we know very well that the circumstances of Ireland are wholly exceptional. I heard with surprise to-night the noble and learned Lord the late Lord Chancellor and other debaters speak as if, and seemed to consider, that the circumstances of England and Ireland were completely analogous, and to ask in every case whether we should like the application of the particular law in question to the landed estates of England. It is too late to ask that question. After all, this Bill is meant to meet, as we believe, a great and vital emergency. It is only a step in the long course of evolution which has transformed the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland. It began with the Bill of 1870; it went on with the Bill of 1881; it went on with the Bill of 1887, and it went on with the Bill of 1891; and there are other Bills which I do not wish to recall; but is it possible, in view of that long course of exceptional legislation, to maintain that every phrase of our Bill is to be scrutinised as if it applied to Kent or to Yorkshire? After all, my Lords, you know as well as I do that the course of Irish land legislation has been one apparently to tide over the difficulty of the moment, but in reality to prevent what many of you believe is the sole source of the evils of Ireland—the tendency to agrarian revolution. And if in the course of that long legislation we have arrived at a state of things where, according to the testimony of all, the Land Purchase Acts are working with singular peace, singular good faith, and singular absence of arrears of payment, it is not much if we at this time of day endeavour to meet a crying and acknowledged evil with legislation which is also in its nature exceptional. I have only one thing more to say, and that is with special reference to the condition of things before your Lordships' House. I am expressly debarred from using the spirited language of the Lord Privy Seal. I have not his dash—it is because I have never been in any House but this, and that has impoverished my speech—but I do feel very acutely that there is a great deal more at stake to-night than the Bill before your Lordships. I am not for one moment going to say that your existence is at stake. I do not say it is any more at stake now than it was last year, or than it will be next year. I do not either wish to make myself the participator of the predictions of the noble Marquess opposite, who thinks that this House, if it falls, will necessarily drag down the other. But I do feel this, and I think that, without any undue contact with the constituencies, everybody must feel that there is in the air much respecting this House which should make this House walk warily. I, for one, have never disguised my conviction that since the passing of the Franchise Act of 1884 it is not possible for this House as at present constituted to claim co-ordinate jurisdiction with the freely-elected Representatives of the people in the House of Commons. I do not go beyond that at this juncture. It is, perhaps, a considerable thing for me to say in the position that I occupy, but so much I do feel from the very bottom of my heart, and I venture to say that if every one of your Lordships was to be free to speak absolutely what was in his mind at this moment you probably would not greatly differ from me in that opinion. What is it that is attacked, and attacked with considerable strength, at this moment? It is that right you propose to exercise to-night—your right to veto the result of the deliberations of the House of Commons. What is your position? The Government comes and puts before you an administrative measure which it says in its opinion is necessary to the security of peace and order in Ireland. That measure comes up with the approbation of the other House of Parliament, and with the support of four-fifths of the elected Representatives of the island which it will affect and the fairly-given vote of the House of Commons. You say for the most part that you are in favour of a voluntary Bill which, according to the acknowledgment of many, would deal with eight or nine-tenths of the cases that are at issue. In preference to offering any attempt at compromise in this direction, to give effect to your expressed views and policy, you utter a dead and sullen negative. With the Bill that is offered to you under this high and solemn responsibility you prefer the right of veto, which is perhaps one of the most dangerous functions of a Second Chamber, to the right of revision, which is, after all, one of its most useful functions. I was much censured last year for saying that you might well have chosen that wiser part and have revised the Home Rule Bill and sent it down, not necessarily for the acceptance of the House of Commons, but, at any rate, as a clear, honest, and outspoken definition of your policy in that matter. In this case I believe that that course would have been more expedient. At any rate, you would have been able to say that by the Act which we—I am now speaking in your name—are willing to pass, and which would probably have dealt with the great mass of claimant cases in Ireland, we are divesting ourselves of any responsibility for anything that may occur from the failure of this Bill. You take upon yourselves a very grave responsibility. It is too late, I suppose, now to ask your Lordships to pause for one moment and think how different the case might be if you in your responsibility were willing to offer your alternative policy to ours, and at any rate to prevent this from being a barren Session as regards the hopes of these evicted tenants. I suppose it is too late to hope for any such contingency, and therefore I will only conclude this inadequate appeal with a sentence from an often-quoted orator—the Duke of Argyll—and will ask you not to forget that on the great question of land in Ireland "we are playing with edged tools and with fire at the door of a powder magazine."

The Duke of ARGYLL: May I ask the date of that quotation?

The Earl of ROSEBERY: Why, surely the noble Duke's ideas do not vary with time! The date is 1880.

The Duke of ARGYLL: Exactly, And since then the Act of 1881 has been passed. And I must say no quotation from my speeches before the Act of 1881 can fairly be made in this House with regard to my opinions upon the land question after that Act was passed.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: Then we may take 1881 as being a sort of "Hegira," a chronological period in the noble Duke's life, before which we are not allowed to make any reference to his speeches, but after which we have full licence and liberty to do so. The sentence I quoted has no reference to any particular condition. It is a question of Irish land. Does he suppose that dealing with questions connected with Irish land is not playing with fire in a powder magazine now because the Act of 1881 was passed—that we are not in the same danger as regards the Irish Question? Does he suppose, in the circumstances disclosed by Mr. Courtney in his speech and by Mr. Justice Mathew in his Report, we are not in the same position as regards the danger of trifling with the Irish Land Question?

The Duke of ARGYLL: No, certainly not.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: I do not care to labour the point. The point is merely a quotation, and I may say on the noble Duke's own authority an insignificant quotation under the present circumstances, but he is in the habit of quoting from other people, and he must not complain at being quoted in return. I will only say, in the words of the noble Duke, that even since 1881 the position of Irish land is one which does not allow of trifling, which does not allow of dead negatives to the proposals of a responsible Government, and still less does it allow for the absolute ignoring of the wishes of the Irish Party in the House of Commons and of the House of Commons itself.

On question whether the word ("now") shall stand part of the Motion?

Their Lordships divided:—Contents 30; Not-Contents 249.

Resolved in the negative; and Bill to be read 2ª this day three months.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 11) (LAGAN, &c. CANALS) BILL.—(No. 191.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Amendments made.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 210.)

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 202.)

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

House adjourned at five minutes past Twelve o'clock A.M., to Thursday next, Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 14th August 1894.

QUESTIONS.

THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Gloucester, Stroud): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Thames and Severn Canal is still so much out of repair as to be unfit for navigation; and whether any, and, if any, what steps have been taken by the Board of Trade, in accordance with the assurances given by the ex-President of the Board of Trade on 10th January, 1894, to compel the Thames and Severn Canal Company or the Great Western Railway Company to render the canal fit for navigation?

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.): Yes, Sir; the Board of Trade are aware that the greater portion of the canal remains in a condition which renders it practically unfit for navigation. The Board have for months been in active communication with the Canal Company and they hoped that the negotiations which have been in progress between the proprietors of the canal and an association of representatives of neighbouring allied navigations would ere this have been brought to a satisfactory issue. I understand that in June a proposal was made by the proprietors to the allied navigations to hand over the canal to them on certain terms, and, from a letter written by the secretary to the association on the 3rd of this month I gather that the allied navigations are employing an engineer to make a report and that they propose finally to consider the proprietors' proposals at a meeting in September. The Board of Trade will do everything in their power to facilitate an arrangement, but it is, to say the least, extremely doubtful whether the Board have any compulsory powers in the matter.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Is it not a fact that the Great Western Railway Company are practically the owners of the canal; have they not bought up the greater part of the shares without the sanction of Parliament; and have they not let the canal get into a very disreputable condition?

*MR. BRYCE: I understand that the Great Western Railway have what is called a controlling influence; but what the number of proprietors who remain independently of the Railway Company is at present I am unable to say.

MR. BYRNMOR JONES: Has not the Board of Trade the power to declare the canal derelict?

*MR. BRYCE: I doubt that. There seems to be great doubt whether Section 17 of the Act of 1873 applies to this case, because it can hardly be said that the Great Western Railway are proprietors of the canal.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE EDENDERRY UNION.

Mr. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Edenderry Board of Guardians, at the suggestion of the Local Government Board, did on the 21st of July last reconsider their previous decision (to deprive the labourer M'Namara, Balrennet, of the cottage which was built on his representation), and by a majority passed a resolution restoring M'Namara; and that on the 4th of August, on the motion of Mr. Tyrell, J.P., the resolution of the 21st of July was rescinded, leaving the case as it stood previously; and will the Local Government Board, in view of their own statement that the course adopted by the Edenderry Board of Guardians was contrary to the spirit and intention of the Labourers Acts, again make an effort to have the Guardians reconsider this case, or will the Local Government Board, in view of the Guardians' resolution of the 21st of July, now take the decision into their own hands?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The facts are correctly stated in the first paragraph. The Guardians' resolution of the 21st of July giving the house to M'Namara was passed by a majority of 11 to eight, and the resolution of the 4th of August which rescinded that of the 21st of July after due notice, was passed by 14 to seven. The Local Government Board have addressed the Guardians several times on the subject, and pointed out that the course adopted by them was contrary to the spirit and intention of the Labourers Act. The Guardians, however, still adhere to their determination not to give the cottage to M'Namara, and I may add that so far as the Local Government Board are aware the majority of Guardians, by whom the rescinding resolution of the 4th instant was passed, was made up of eight elected and six *ex officio* Guardians. As the law at present stands, the selection of occupants for cottages under the Labourers Acts entirely rests with the Guardians, and the Board have no power to take the selection of a tenant for the cottage in question into their own hands.

Mr. KENNEDY: As this is a case of great hardship and injustice will the Irish Local Government Board make a further effort to induce the Guardians to reconsider their decision?

Mr. J. MORLEY: As I have already explained, the Board have no power to take the selection of a tenant into their own hands.

Mr. KENNEDY: But cannot the right hon. Gentleman ask the Board to reconsider the decision come to?

Mr. J. MORLEY: My information is that the Local Government Board do not think that even the presence of one of their Inspectors at the next meeting of the Guardians would have any effect in inducing them to reconsider their decision. I believe the case is not a very strong one on all its merits.

BURIAL BOARD FEES.

Mr. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Notts, Mansfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether he is aware that the Ulverston Burial Board and the Burial Board of Toddington, Bedfordshire, exact in the unconsecrated parts of their cemeteries the same fees as are payable to the parochial incumbents in the consecrated portions; (2) whether their tables of fees and charges have received the sanction of the Home Office; (3) whether steps will be taken to obtain the abandonment of these charges; (4) whether any, and what, action has been taken with regard to a similar table of fees adopted by the Hounslow Burial Board; and (5) whether, in view of these and other cases of the like kind, he will call the attention of Burial Boards to the provisions of the law in regard to such charges, and require an alteration of all tables of fees and charges which are not in conformity therewith?

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): (1) The tables of both Burial Boards contain the fees mentioned in the question, but in the case of Ulverston the clerk informs me that in respect of burials in unconsecrated ground they are not "exacted," but that it is carefully explained that they are voluntary payments. (2) The Toddington Table has not been sanctioned by the Home Officer, nor has the Ulverston Table so far as regards the fees mentioned in the question. (3) I will communicate at once with both Burial Boards with a view to the amendment of the tables. The Clerk to the Ulverston Board assures me that his Board will comply with the law at once. (4) I communicated with the Hounslow Burial Board and obtained an amendment of the table which makes it quite clear that the fees to incumbents and "officiating ministers" are payable only when the burial is in consecrated ground. (5) If my attention is called to any other case where the tables of fees are not in accordance with the law, I will ask the Burial Boards to alter them. I have no power to compel them to do so, but I have no doubt they will be ready to comply with the law when their attention is called to its provisions.

MASTER OF DOCKYARD TUGS.

ADMIRAL FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether their Lordships will consider the claim of the masters of sea-going dockyard tugs to have their pensions calculated upon the basis of their annual earnings rather than, as at present, upon their scale of day pay of 5s., in view of the great responsibilities cast upon them as pilots of Her Majesty's ships entering and leaving harbour, and bearing in mind that their Lordships have recently accepted the principle in dealing with the pensions of Admiralty coopers?

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. ROBERTSON, Dundee): The pension of these men are governed by an Order in Council under which it has been held that pilotage allowances cannot be taken into account.

ADMIRAL FIELD: Will their Lordships consider the advisability of altering the order in the interests of justice?

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I cannot make any promise to that effect.

RATLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he is aware that the public elementary school at Ratley, in Warwickshire, has been closed since the 29th of June, and that no intimation has been given to the inhabitants that it will be re-opened; whether communications from Ratley were made to the Department on the 4th and 16th of July and on the 1st of August, and a reply was sent on the 25th of July saying that a letter had been written to the managers of the school, but that no answer had been received from them; whether any answer has yet been received from the managers; and, if so, to what effect; and whether any and what steps will be taken by the Department to ensure that there shall be proper elementary education at Ratley?

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Mr. ACLAND, York, W.R., Rotherham): The Department were informed by the managers of this school on the 24th of July that the ordinary summer holidays were being given this year in July and the beginning of August instead of August and the beginning of September as previously, and that the school would be re-opened in the second week in August. This letter was received just after the letter from the Department, mentioned in the question, had been put forward. I do not know whether the school has been re-opened yet, but I will inquire. There is nothing irregular in the case so far as appears.

WAGES ON GOVERNMENT FARMS.

MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the fact that the men employed on the Park Farm, Shimpling, Suffolk, belonging to the Crown (Woods and Forest Department), which farm is in hand, have applied to have their wages raised from 10s. a week, their present pay; whether they have been told that their wages will be raised when other farmers raise theirs; and whether the Government will in this case, as at Woolwich and other places, take the initiative, and pay at least 12s. a week?

***THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY** (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): The Park Farm at Shimpling belongs to the Crown, and is in hand. The better class of labourers employed upon the Farm are paid more than 10s. a week, but there are ordinary labourers receiving 10s. The Commissioner of Woods informs me that no application has been made by the men to have their wages raised, and that the rates actually paid are those prevalent in the neighbourhood.

ATTACKS ON IRISH HARVESTERS IN ENGLAND.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will state the result of his further inquiry into the attack by a number of roughs upon some Irish harvesters near the Red Lion, Potter's Bar, on the 21st of July; whether he is now aware that the hut in the field in which these Irish haymakers were asleep when arrested at 2 o'clock on the following Sunday morning was their usual sleeping place assigned to them by their employer, and that they were not in the hut for the purpose of concealment from the police; whether, having regard to the statement made by the police that these Irishmen were not in bed when arrested, but lying on hay on the floor, he is aware that it is not the practice of English farmers who engage Irishmen for haymaking to provide them with spring mattresses or feather beds, but with a supply of hay or straw on which to sleep; whether any charge has yet been made against the Englishmen who attacked these Irish harvesters; whether it is proposed to act upon the suggestion of the Chairman of the Court, and take evidence of the landlord of the Red Lion; and whether the fine and costs imposed upon Patrick Shield, who was not present during the disturbance, but unwell in the hut in the field, will be remitted?

MR. ASQUITH: I have had a full inquiry made into this matter. It is true that the hut in which one of the men was arrested was their usual sleeping place. I regret that the information supplied to me and given by me to the House the other day upon this point was not more explicit, but it was not intended to suggest that the man was in the hut for the purpose of concealing himself from the police. As to the 4th and 5th paragraphs I have had a statement taken from Mr. Stallabran, the landlord of the Red Lion, and all the facts have been carefully investigated. Mr. Stallabran states as follows:—

"The house was closed some few minutes before 11 o'clock on Saturday, 21st July, and everyone went out peaceably. No disturbance whatever took place in my house during the evening, and no cause for any disturbance arose. I am quite ready to go before any Magistrate, but I do not think I could throw any light on the subject, as the disturbance took place after my house was closed and I was not present. Some few minutes after 11 o'clock I heard a disturbance going on about 50 yards from my house in the direction of Mr. Read's farm. I went out of my private entrance and saw police disperse the crowd, who went away in various directions; some quarter of an hour afterwards I heard shouting some distance off, but I did not go down, but came indoors and went to bed, and saw no more of the affair. I do not know any of the men, and cannot say whether the man Patrick Shields was in my house on the night in question or not."

There is no satisfactory evidence to show who was responsible for the original disturbance, and no proceedings could be taken in respect of it with any prospect of success. The men in question were arrested for stoning and attacking the police. It does not appear to be true that Shields was unwell. His employer, Mr. Reid, states that he was not ill on the day in question, but at his work as usual. He was identified as being present, and taking part in the attack on the police, and I cannot upon the materials before me interfere with the conclusion come to by the Magistrates. I will take this opportunity of answering the supplemental question put the other day by the hon. and learned Member for North Louth (Mr. T. M. Healy) with regard to an attack on some Irish labourers in Lancashire. I have received a full Report from the Lancashire police on the subject, and it appears that on the 24th of June a very serious and most disgraceful attack was made upon a body of Irishmen in a house upon a farm at Altcar. The assailants set fire to the house in which the men were at the time, and assaulted with pitchforks, heavy sticks and bars of iron every Irishman they could find. I am glad to say that some five or six of the ringleaders were identified and taken into custody and indicted at the Assizes, where they pleaded guilty. They have since been sentenced, one to five years' penal servitude; another to three years; another to 15 months, another to 12 months, and another to six months, and that, I think, is a satisfactory proof that English Juries and English Judges are quite prepared to enforce the law impartially and stringently wherever a breach of it takes place, no matter whom the lawbreakers may be.

Mr. **WEIR**: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any effort will be made to punish the Englishmen who attacked the Irishmen at Potter's Bar?

Mr. **ASQUITH**: What I said was that there was no satisfactory evidence to show how the disturbance began or who were the aggressors or who the attacked party. The four men punished were punished not for taking part in the disturbance, but because that afterwards when the police came to disperse the crowd they attacked and stoned the police.

Mr. **WEIR**: Were they punished simply because they were Irishmen? If they had been Englishmen would they not have escaped?

Mr. **ASQUITH**: No, Sir.

Mr. **WEIR** asked whether the Justices were justified in sending one of the men to gaol for 21 days, seeing that the police intimated that the man was found in his usual sleeping place in the hut in the field.

Mr. **ASQUITH**: My hon. Friend is not quite accurate. The man was sentenced to 21 days for threatening the police with a knife. I have made a most careful investigation into the matter, and I cannot discover that there was any question of Englishmen or Irishmen in the matter. If there had been, no censure would be too great. The man arrested in the hut was identified, on evidence which the Magistrates thought satisfactory, of having been one of those who attacked the police.

Mr. **T. M. HEALY**: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he considers the attempt, partially successful, to roast a whole number of Irishmen in some cabin has been fairly dealt with by the sentences he has read out?

Mr. **ASQUITH**: It seems to me that the sentences are adequate.

Mr. **T. M. HEALY**: If they had been Irishmen they would have been dealt with very differently.

Mr. **SPEAKER**: Order, order!

THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION OF MILITARY CANDIDATES.

Mr. **BARTLEY** (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will arrange that candidates for commissions in the Army may if they wish it, by paying a special fee to cover the cost, be officially examined as to their medical fitness before undergoing the competition?

*The **FINANCIAL SECRETARY** to the **WAR OFFICE** (Mr. Woodall, Hanley) (who replied) said: A very full statement of the physical conditions required of candidates for the Army has been prepared, and may be obtained by candidates on application to the War Office. With that statement before him, any qualified surgeon will be able to inform candidates whether they are likely to pass the medical examination. It is therefore unnecessary, even if it were practicable, to authorise any official medical examination of candidates before the examination which follows successful competition for commissions.

Mr. **BARTLEY**: Is it not a fact that there is a considerable number of cases in which young men who have passed the examination have been subsequently excluded in consequence of physical unfitness? Would it not be more considerate to the candidates to allow them to be examined before they go in for training, so as to enable them to avoid a disaster which in some cases means a loss of many years to them.

*Mr. **WOODALL**: The hon. Member is aware that the matter had been recently under discussion in that House, and I am unable to add anything to the answer I have given.

ST. JAMES'S SCHOOL, BERMONDSEY.

Mr. **MACDONA** (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will explain upon what grounds the Education Department have demanded that expensive alterations shall be made in the schools of St. James, Bermondsey, which contain about 550 children in average attendance, and have had most excellent Reports, every year; and whether, in consideration of the poorness of the neighbourhood, and the many burdens and high rate of taxation in the district, he will make his orders for alterations as light as possible, and reconsider the heavy demand he has recently made upon the slender resources of so poor a neighbourhood?

Mr. **ACLAND**: Since 1889 there have been repeated references in the Reports of the school to the need of better class-room accommodation, in order to relieve overcrowding and to allow a better organisation of the school. The managers have been asked to enlarge the class-rooms as a condition of their continued recognition, and to partition the main room; and they appear ready to do so, and are in correspondence with the Department as to the plans. No other requirement has been made by the Department; but it appears that certain alterations to the drainage and offices have been ordered by the Vestry as Sanitary Authority for the district.

Mr. MACDONA: Seeing that this is a very poor district, and it will be difficult to raise the money, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that failure to do so will involve the handing over of the school to the School Board, and thereby cast extra burdens on the ratepayers?

Mr. ACLAND: I am afraid that that is the case. In London, as elsewhere, schools have to fill up vacancies, and if a school cannot be supported voluntarily the burden must fall on the rates.

VICTORIA VICTUALLING YARD, DEPTFORD.

Mr. MACDONA: I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if he is aware that there are two men who have been for over 30 years employed at the Victoria Victualling Yard, Deptford, upon permanent daywork, and two for over 20 years, and five at an average of 10 years; and whether he will take this fact into consideration and reinstate them from their present pay of 26s. a week to 30s. a week, which they have heretofore been earning until the recent reduction to 26s. a week?

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I have already stated, in an answer to the hon. Member for Deptford on the 9th instant, that there has been no reduction of wages. The 30s. rate was paid for a short time by mistake, and the authorized rate of 26s. has been resumed.

Mr. MACDONA: I am perfectly aware that a similar question has been put; but the answer to that given last week was that no permanent men were employed.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: The meaning being that that particular rating had been abolished.

Mr. MACDONA: My question referred exclusively to permanent coopers.

FISHERY CRUISERS ROUND THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that during the last few days two trawlers have been working night and day at Loch Roag and along the coast of the Island of Lewis, and that they have completely ruined Loch Roag as a fishing place for the local fishermen; if he will state why there is no officer of fisheries at the present time at Stornoway; whether the new cruiser has visited Loch Roag; if so, when; and whether immediate steps will be taken to deal with illegal trawling around the Island of Lewis?

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Sir G. Trevelyan, Glasgow, Bridgeton): I am informed by the Fishery Board that the Commander of the fishery cruiser *Vigilant* returned to Oban on Saturday last after having visited during the week most of the places likely to be frequented by beam trawlers off the West Coast and the islands as far north as Broad Bay and the Butt of Lews, and reported that no trawlers were seen in or near the protected waters. No complaints were received, except at Stornoway, and these were of a vague nature, and founded on hearsay or surmise that lights seen during night were those of a trawler. The reason why there is at present no fishery officers stationed at Stornoway is that during the progress of the great summer herring fishing on the East Coast, and in Orkney and Shetland, it is necessary for branding purposes to transfer all the available West Coast officers to other districts. The new cruiser has not yet visited Loch Roag, but if evidence were forthcoming that trawlers were really working there, she could be sent to the neighbourhood.

Mr. WEIR asked if it was not a fact that the new cruiser had never visited Loch Roag?

Sir G. TREVELYAN: My hon. Friend must see that one could pick out many places which the cruiser had not visited. It is impossible for it to be in different places at the same time. It is doing very good work, and it goes where it is most required.

Mr. WEIR: Is it not a fact that a cruiser intended for the protection of the fisheries off the Island of Lewis is hundreds of miles from the coast of the island?

[No answer was given.]

ALDERSHOT WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BARTLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the condition of the water supply at Aldershot; whether he is aware that the boys of the Public School Battalion were warned not to drink the water, as it was so bad that even the filters were insufficient and out of order; and whether he will take steps to secure at once an ample supply of potable water?

*__Mr. WOODALL__ (who replied) said: There is an ample supply of excellent potable water for the troops at Aldershot from the Bourley reservoirs, and this water was supplied to the boys of the Public School Battalion by means of a standpipe fixed to the main. Notices are put on certain pumps that the water from these wells is to be used for washing purposes only.

Mr. BARTLEY: Is it not a fact that the boys were cautioned not to drink the water during the recent movements of the Public School Battalion?

*__Mr. WOODALL__: The caution had reference to a particular kind of water, which was kept for sanitary and not for drinking purposes.

THE MERCANTILE MARINE FUND.

Sir M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has appointed a Departmental Committee to inquire into the condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund, and the mode of levying the Light Dues; whether he will state the Order of Reference to such Committee, and the names of the members; and whether any proposal to relieve the shipping interest of Light Dues at the cost of the Exchequer will be excluded from the inquiry of the Committee?

Mr. BRYCE: Yes, Sir; I have appointed an Inter-Departmental Committee with the following Reference:—

> "To inquire into the present financial condition of the Mercantile Marine Fund, the sources of its revenue, and the mode in which that revenue is applied; as also into the principles upon which Light Dues are, at present, levied, having regard to their incidence upon different classes of ships and voyages."

And

> "To advise what (if any) changes are desirable for increasing the revenue of the Mercantile Marine Fund, for relieving it from any of the existing charges, and for adjusting such inequalities in the incidence of the Light Dues as may be found to exist."

The Committee will consist of—The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin (Chairman), Lord Welby, Lord Brassey, Sir Robert Hamilton, the hon. Members for the South Division of Bristol and the St. Rollox Division of Glasgow, one of the Secretaries or Assistant Secretaries of the Board of Trade, Mr. Ryder, of the Treasury, Captain Vyvyan, of the Trinity House, Mr. Fenwick Fenwick, President of the Chamber of Shipping of the United Kingdom, and Mr. John Glover.

FARNHAM TITHE DISPUTE.

Mr. JEFFREYS (Hants, Basingstoke): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that in the case of "Simmonds *v.* Heath," begun 18 months ago in the Farnham County Court over a disputed tithe claim for £3 10s., the defendant has secured three Judgments in his favour; that the plaintiff as well as defendant was content with the Judgments of the Court of Appeal given in November, 1893; on what grounds has the Treasury since intervened and given notice to the defendant that they will take up the case and appeal to the House of Lords, and that the defendant must lodge his case there by 13th September next; whether there is any precedent for the Treasury thus intervening in private litigation for their own purposes, without agreeing to indemnify both sides against the costs of the appeal; whether the Treasury will consider the consequence of their action upon the defendant, who is a small dairyman and grocer, and quite unable to pay for the preparation of his case before the House of Lords; and whether the Treasury will give the necessary indemnity for costs, in order that the defendant may have full justice done at the hearing of his case?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: The Treasury has intervened in this case in order to obtain an authoritative judicial decision upon a question of considerable importance in the administration of extraordinary Tithe Redemption 1886 by the Board of Agriculture. The Treasury will be prepared to relieve both parties to the appeal of the amount of their necessary costs.

ASHTON-UNDER-LYME SEWAGE SCHEME.

Mr. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has considered the Petition against the Ashton-under-Lyme Sewage Scheme presented to him by the inhabitants of Dukinfield; and whether he has arrived at any decision in the matter; and, if not, whether he can state when he will be in a position to settle this question, which is causing such uneasiness to the ratepayers of Dukinfield?

***The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD** (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): I have had under consideration the representations made to the Local Government Board with reference to the Ashton-under-Lyme sewerage scheme, and my decision will be communicated to the authorities within a few days.

WATER SUPPLY TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, having regard to the fact that one set of water closets off the Committee Room corridors is supplied from a cistern from which water is drawn for domestic purposes, he will state from what system and source the drinking water in the dining room and bar is obtained?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I will answer this question, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman. The drinking water in the dining room and bar is drawn direct from the main tanks of the building, which are filled from the main pipes connected with the artesian wells and waterworks of the Government at Orange Street, Trafalgar Square. Owing, however, to the deficiency of the supplies from Orange Street, the Government mains have frequently to be replenished from the mains of the Chelsea Waterworks Company to the extent of half the consumption.

Mr. WEIR asked if the water thus obtained was placed in the same tank as that from the artesian wells?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I cannot say.

JABEZ BALFOUR.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Federal Judge has granted the extradition of Jabez Balfour; and, if so, whether there is any right of appeal?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): We have not yet heard the decision of the Federal Judge at Salta.

PROMOTION IN THE CUSTOMS SERVICE.

Mr. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that the new Regulations which came into force at the commencement of the present year in the Customs Service has militated seriously against the promotion of many servants in the Service, and that under this new Regulation the position of examining officers has been changed to their disadvantage; and whether such Regulation is in accordance with the Minute of 24th March, 1891?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: It is surmised that the question refers to the modification of the system of keeping the warehousing accounts introduced in the Department on 1st January last. I am informed that this modification has had no serious effect as yet, but may probably lead ultimately to some reduction in the number of examining officers of the First and Second Classes. Such a possibility is, however, expressly contemplated by the Treasury Minute referred to, which states that the augmentation or the decrease of numbers in any class must depend on the requirements of the Public Service as estimated by the Board.

THE WARINA INCIDENT.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the French Government have offered any reparation for the death of the three British officers who were killed in the French attack on

British Forces near Warina in December last?

Sir E. GREY: There is nothing to add to the previous answer given on the 13th of July. The position of Warina appears to be open to much dispute.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: May I ask what that answer was?

Sir E. GREY: It is impossible to settle this question satisfactorily until the position of Warina has been determined beyond dispute. If the hon. Gentleman can throw any additional information upon that subject, we shall be very glad to have it.

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): Has the Government taken any steps to ascertain the position of Warina?

Sir E. GREY: The actual position is this: One set of calculations was produced which placed Warina in a certain position. Since then another set of calculations has been brought forward placing it in a different position. It is impossible to put this question beyond dispute without sending an astronomical expedition to make a survey on the spot, and Her Majesty's Government have not taken any steps to do that. In view of the pending discussion with the French Government on many subjects of dispute in West Africa, I think this would not be the proper time to do that.

THE BOTHWELL PARK DISTURBANCE.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether his attention has been called to a complaint, from a public meeting in the neighbourhood, that the police were the aggressors in a disturbance at the mining village of Bothwell Park last week; and whether, in the interests of the public and of the police force, he has made or will make inquiry into this complaint?

Sir G. TREVELYAN: I have received from the County Clerk of Lanarkshire Reports by the Chief Constable in regard to the occurrence referred to in the question, but as I am informed that Crown Counsel last week ordered that four of the persons concerned in the disturbance which then took place should be tried summarily before the Sheriff, and as the whole facts will doubtless be publicly elicited at the trial, it is probably better that I should say nothing further in regard to the case at present.

THE CROFTERS' ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. WEIR had on the Paper the following question:—To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the Government have not given effect to the promises made by its Leaders, prior to and during the last General Election, that immediately on the return to power of the Liberal Party a Crofters' Acts Amendment Bill would be introduced and passed, he will give an assurance that at the beginning of next Session these pledges will be redeemed?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The only part of this question that is in Order is that which asks whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer will give an assurance that at the beginning of next Session a Crofters' Acts Amendment Bill will be introduced.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): I have already told my hon. Friend—and I think I have answered a great many questions on this subject—that I can give no undertaking with reference to any measure that may be introduced next Session.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that the number of these people is getting so few that probably very few will be left to come under the Act next year?

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): In view of the right hon. Gentleman's answer, may I ask whether those Members who have stated in the House that they have received undertakings with reference to particular measures next Session are mistaken?

Dr. MACGREGOR (Inverness-shire): With respect to this Bill, Sir, which has now been finally withdrawn from the Order Paper by the Government, may I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether its abandonment in the face of the enemy is not a piece of political cowardice unworthy of Her Majesty's Government?

[These questions were not answered.]

GRANTS TO SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS.

Mr. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Vice President of the

Committee of Council on Education whether it is the practice of the Department to refuse grants to small rural schools under Article 105, although the population within a radius of two miles is under 500, on the ground that the population of the civil parish in which the school is situate exceeds that number; whether he is aware that this practice excludes many schools quite as necessitous as many which receive such grants; and whether the opinion of the Law Officers has been taken as to this practice being in accordance with the Education Code?

MR. ACLAND: If the hon. Member refers to the Article in question, he will see that the claim for a grant may be made on either alternative—of the population of the school district, or of the population within two miles of the school by the nearest road. There is not, and has not ever been, any such practice as that stated in the question.

SMALL-POX AT COVENTRY.

MR. HOPWOOD (Lancashire, S.E., Middleton): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board whether he is aware that William Windridge, who died of small-pox in the City Hospital, Coventry, on the 22nd June last, was certified by the medical officer, Dr. Fenton, to have died unvaccinated, described by the doctor to be an anti-vaccinationist, who refused the protection afforded by vaccination, and died a martyr to his prejudices; whether the Department has since received a statement, signed by the mother, widow, and brother of the deceased, that he had been vaccinated and was an advocate of vaccination; and whether the Department will inquire into the matter, with a view of preventing the above from appearing in the Registrar General's statistics as an unvaccinated case?

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Sir W. FOSTER, Derby, Ilkeston): The statements on the question are substantially correct, but inquiry has since been made of Dr. Fenton, and he states that Windridge, on more than one occasion, stated to him that he did not think that he had been vaccinated. He states further that he failed to discover the slightest mark of cicatrix or other evidence left by the operation. Windridge had not only refused to be vaccinated, but had made statements to Dr. Fenton with regard to vaccination which satisfied him that he was opposed to vaccination. Dr. Fenton subsequently made inquiry of the mother of the deceased, but could not obtain any satisfactory information as to his having been vaccinated. In face of these contradictory statements I can only say that if my hon. Friend will obtain information for me as to the date and place of the vaccination of the deceased, I will make further inquiry.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL.

MR. HOPWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will, in the Recess, consider the suggestions of Her Majesty's Judges of a Court of Criminal Appeal and Revision of Sentences, with the view of legislation in the next Session of Parliament?

MR. ASQUITH: The suggestions of the Judges have been and are receiving the careful attention of the Government. With reference to legislation next Session, I must refer my hon. Friend to the answer given just now to another question by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

DR. CORNELIUS HERZ.

MR. SCOTT MONTAGU (Hants, New Forest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Dr. Cornelius Herz is still in custody at Bournemouth at the expense of the British Government, under warrants granted by Sir John Bridge, Chief Magistrate of the Metropolitan Police Courts, issued in January, 1893, upon requisitions by the Government of the French Republic; whether, on the 3rd of August, 1894, Dr. Herz was condemned in his absence by a French Court, on the same charges as those set out in the warrants on which he was arrested in England, to imprisonment for five years and a fine of 3,000 francs; whether the French Court declined to admit a medical certificate, signed by Sir Richard Quain, Sir George Johnson, Dr. T. Lauder Brunton, and Dr. William Frazer, stating that, in their opinion, Dr. Herz's removal from his present place of detention would endanger his life; whether the French Court refused to allow Dr. Herz to be represented by Counsel or otherwise, or to allow any statement to be made on his behalf; and whether the continued detention of Dr. Herz under the warrants issued in January, 1893, is legal, having regard to the fact that his case has now been adjudicated upon by the French Courts?

Mr. ASQUITH: Her Majesty's Government have received no official intimation from the French Government with reference to the case of Dr. Herz, and I only know what has appeared in the newspapers, and can express no opinion upon the question whether his continued detention under the warrants issued in January, 1893, is legal. That is a question of law. If Dr. Herz is advised that anything which has happenend under his further detention is illegal, it is competent to him to test the matter by an application to an English Court of Law. I intend to take the opinion of the Law Officers on the subject.

TORPEDO BOAT DESTROYERS.

Mr. MACDONALD (Tower Hamlets, Bow): On behalf of the Member for Portsmouth (Mr. Clough) I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty are satisfied with the two first of the 42 torpedo boat destroyers recently ordered; and whether they are taking care to utilise their experience as to details of the *Havock* and *Hornet* in the construction of other vessels of the same class?

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The Admiralty are glad to recognise that Messrs. Yarrow have been the contractors who have first constructed and completed with rapidity for the British Navy vessels of the high speed of the *Havock* and *Hornet*. On behalf of the Admiralty I am happy to express our satisfaction with the manner in which the contract has been carried out. We are also ready to acknowledge the value which we attach to the designs of Messrs. Yarrow for the machinery of these vessels. Practical proof has been given of this favourable opinion by our use of certain parts of these designs as a guide to contractors for some of the other torpedo boat destroyers since ordered.

THE CASE OF EMILY CULLIFORD.

Mr. BURNIE (Swansea Town): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received a communication from Mrs. Gertrude Jenner, of Denvor Castle, Cardiff, with reference to the case of Emily Culliford, who was wrongly charged with murder at Penarth, and acquitted at the Swansea Assizes, and who, whilst in custody and before her trial, is stated to have been subjected to unnecessarily harsh treatment; whether suitable compensation can be given to Miss Culliford for the wrong she has sustained; and whether he will take steps to prevent undue severity towards persons in custody before they are tried?

Mr. ASQUITH: I have inquired into this matter, and a full answer is being sent to Miss Jenner dealing with the various grounds of complaint alleged by her. The general result is that, beyond the indignity to which all innocent persons are unfortunately exposed who are arrested on a gross charge such as this, which turns out to be unfounded, there is no reason for thinking that Miss Culliford was harshly treated. It is impossible, therefore, to recognise any claim to compensation without establishing a precedent which could be invoked by all persons who are shown to have been wrongfully accused. Any case in which undue severity is alleged will be carefully investigated, and if the allegation is sustained there will be no hesitation in taking fit action.

MOTION.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER).

Motion made, and Question put,

> "That the proceedings on the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the provisions of the Standing Order Sittings of the House."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes 91; Noes 52.—(Division List, No. 230.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—(No. 10.)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress, 13th August.*]

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 9, after the last Amendment, to leave out the words—

> "In any county in which a majority of the workmen employed underground in the mines therein shall so resolve in manner hereinafter provided, and so long as such resolution shall remain unrescinded.—(*Mr. D. Thomas.*)

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR (Leeds, Central) said, that when his speech was interrupted at midnight yesterday he was proceeding to examine the grounds on which the demand of those who promoted the Bill was based—he meant the demand for extending its provisions universally and uniformly to every part of the country. He ventured to say that on this subject there had been a considerable shifting of position on the part of those who represented the miners —in the Miners' Federation. They used to be threatened, not so very long ago, with the horrors of a universal strike if this Bill were not passed, and appeals were made to Parliament to pass this Bill in order to preserve the country from the miseries which such a strike would involve. But they heard little about the universal strike now, and the reason was obvious. On this question a universal strike was impossible so long as there were important districts in which the Organisations of the miners were opposed to the Bill. This, however, brought him to a very important point. The fact that there were these Organisations opposed to the Bill was the justification put forward for not accepting an Amendment to apply the principle of local option in regard to the Bill. What did that mean? It meant simply this: that this legislation was sought simply and solely in order to coerce those districts which were unwilling to come under the provisions of the measure. Had it really come to this: that in the endeavour to coerce districts embracing considerably upwards of 100,000 miners, Parliament was to be asked to assist? If it were so, all he could say was that their traditional liberties must indeed be in danger. There was only one justification in any degree plausible which he could imagine for legislation of this kind, and it was that such legislation was urgently demanded in the interests of the health or the safety of those who were employed in the mines. As a matter of fact, in the former history of this question this plea was frequently put forward, but it had been fairly examined by the Royal Commission on Labour, and he did not hesitate to say that it had been completely upset. The conclusions at which the Commission arrived were that the miners were not in an exceptional position as regarded the unhealthiness of their employment, but, on the contrary, that their employment was on the whole more healthy than the average of employments, and that as regarded safety the Eight Hours Bill would not promote safety nor diminish the risk of accidents, but would be likely to have the effect of increasing them. These conclusions arrived at by the Royal Commission were not disputed in the Minority Report. And further than that, in the Debate of yesterday there was not a single claim put forward for this Bill on the ground of health and safety. This was a very striking fact, and he could not say how far, in the first instance, pleas more on the ground of health and safety were put forward by the miners with thorough conviction; but he had no doubt that it was those pleas which secured for this Bill a great deal of the sympathy which it received, and a great deal of the support which was given to it by those who had no personal interest in the question electorately or otherwise. If this high ground of health and of safety was abandoned, as he had no doubt it had been, what remained? There remained the lower ground of self-interest, and that alone. Yesterday, only three hon. Members spoke against local option, and each of them opposed the Amendment on the ground alone that if it were passed those districts which adopted the Bill would be unfavourably affected as compared with those districts which did not. That was really the only argument which had been put forward against the

Amendment. It was surely a new and indefensible doctrine that Parliament was to be called in in order to redress the balance between one district and another. But the inequalities between districts did not apply alone to hours of work. There were inequalities as regarded wages, and in other respects. Were they, then, to extend the principle of this legislation to all these inequalities, so as to bring about uniformity all round? Properly regarded, the Bill was nothing but a step in the direction of collectivism. They might as well be asked to go the whole way and take the mines directly under the management of the State. That would be a conclusion which would be not unsatisfactory to some Members of that House; for example, to the Member for Battersea (Mr. John Burns), but was that a step which the House generally could contemplate? What the Bill actually proposed did not amount to this, but it was in this direction and was sufficiently absurd, for it meant that more than 100,000 miners were to be brought under the yoke of uniformity, and subject against their will to the conditions of this Bill, in order that the Miners' Federation might be assisted to reduce the output and to keep up the price of coal in the hope that by that means they would be able to maintain wages. To put the matter in other words, what Parliament was asked to do was to help the Miners' Federation—the most powerful organisation of workmen in the world—to coerce the districts of South Wales, Northumberland, and Durham, in order that wages might be kept up, and the price of coal raised to the consumers all over the country. A more impudent claim had never been put forward by any body of men, yet it was for this claim that the Government gave exceptional facilities.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out, in line 1, the word "county," and insert the words "district as hereinafter determined."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'county' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Question put, and negatived.

Question proposed,

"That the words 'In any district as hereinafter determined in which a majority of the workmen employed underground in the mines therein shall so resolve in manner hereinafter provided, and so long as such resolution shall remain unrescinded,' be there inserted."

Sir J. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) said, he had listened carefully to the arguments put forward by the promoters of this Bill——

Sir C. W. DILKE said, he would ask the Chairman whether the Debate upon the Amendment to the Amendment would not be limited to the subject-matter thereof?

The CHAIRMAN said, Yes; the discussion must be confined to the substitution of "district" for "county."

Sir J. JOICEY said, that with regard to the Amendment which had just been moved by the hon. Member opposite, so far as he was concerned he could not see, whether it was accepted or not, that it would make very much difference to the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr. Whether they took the county or the district, it did not affect the principle of the thing. There was one matter which had pleased him in the course of the Debate which had taken place. He was led to understand from the statement made by the hon. Member for the Ince Division, who was one of the promoters of the Bill, that the promoters were not disposed to accept any Amendment to the Bill. Now, the Member for Sunderland had his name upon the Bill, and might, he presumed, be considered to be a promoter of the Bill——

***Sir C. W. DILKE** said, he understood this Amendment would be accepted. Might he suggest that it be made at once, so that the lines of the Debate might not be limited.

***Sir J. JOICEY** said, he did not know what authority the right hon. Baronet had for saying that the Amendment would be accepted. He himself was not in a position to say whether it would or would not be accepted.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.) said, that as he understood those in favour of the Amendment would accept the Amendment suggested, it would be convenient that it should be accepted at once, so that a general discussion might be taken upon the amended Amendment.

Mr. J. WILSON (Durham) said, he should be glad to know what was the meaning of the word "district."

THE CHAIRMAN said, that a subsequent Amendment proposed to define the districts. It provided that the districts were to be determined by the Home Secretary, and would be found on page 15.

MR. D. A. THOMAS said that, so far as he was concerned, he was prepared to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leeds. He was not, however, prepared to accept the hon. Gentleman's definition of "district." He rather questioned the ability of not only the present Home Secretary but Home Secretaries in general to define what was a district.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said, he did not explain his Amendment in his speech. He put down in the Amendment what he conceived to be the meaning of a district.

*SIR J. JOICEY, continuing, said, he was glad to find that among the promoters of this Bill there was one, at all events, who had exercised his usual independence of character, and had not concurred in the decision which had been come to by the hon. Member for Ince and his friends to refuse all compromise on this subject whatever. The hon. Member for Sunderland had not only agreed to support this Amendment, but had made a good and sensible speech in its favour. He hoped that the example set by him would be followed by others, and that they might find a means of coming to a compromise which would satisfy the districts represented by himself and the hon. Member for Merthyr. This Bill was one of vital importance to the district he represented, and he must say that in his opinion it was being pushed forward with very great haste. He thought that when a great change of this sort was contemplated it would be a good thing that it should be subjected not only to full and complete discussion in that House, but that the details of the measure affecting the change should be thoroughly thrashed out in the constituencies which were specially interested in the question. He ventured to say that the provisions of this Bill and the effect of the Bill were most imperfectly understood, not only in the mining constituencies but throughout the country, and he should have preferred it to have been held over to another Parliament, when its provisions would have been more thoroughly discussed in the country, so that the constituencies might be fully aware of the effect likely to ensue. A great deal had been said as to the large number of miners who were in favour of this Bill; but he maintained, notwithstanding what had been said by the hon. Member for Ince and his friends, they had no reliable information as to the opinion of the great bulk of the miners within the districts they represented. In Durham and Northumberland there was a small percentage of miners who were in favour of the Bill, as against a large percentage who were opposed to it. What had the Federation districts done to enlighten them on this question? He would like to know whether those hon. Members who supported the Bill had ascertained the feeling of their constituents with regard to its proposals. He was certain that there was a large number of men in the Federated districts who wished to have nothing whatever to do with the Bill, and he would not be satisfied with the mere assertion of one or two gentlemen that that was not so. If Parliament sought to pass an important measure of this kind—a measure which proposed to take away the right of every miner in the country to use his labour to the best of his ability and judgment—they were in duty bound to see that the application of the principle was put forward in such a way that it would cause the least possible amount of friction and the least possible injustice. The measure was entirely in the nature of an experiment. He defied any man to state accurately what would be the result if it became law. In fact, if ever there was an occasion when the House of Commons had been invited to take a leap in the dark this was one. There were many districts which would suffer by this measure much more than others. It was all very well for hon. Members who came from Yorkshire and Lancashire to say that if this Amendment were passed great injury would be done to their districts; but they said nothing about the much greater injury that would be done to the districts represented by himself and the hon. Member for Merthyr. He maintained that the effect produced by the Bill in its present form would be much more disastrous to their districts than it would be to the districts represented by the hon. Member for Eccles and the hon. Member for Ince.

There were some parts of the country where very little effect would be produced. In Yorkshire and in Staffordshire they practically had the benefit of this measure already, and the Bill would make very little difference there. It would increase the cost a little, but it would be a mere trifle to the effect produced in other districts which were not so fortunately placed as they were. The hon. Member for Merthyr had made an admirable speech, much of which would stand for a defence of Durham and Northumberland in this matter; but he maintained that whatever strong arguments they might have to support their case, it was almost impossible to get the ordinary Member of Parliament to understand the practical and the technical difficulties that they would have to contend with in this measure. Durham and Northumberland would specially suffer under this measure. He asserted, however, that they had special claims, for they constituted about the largest coal-producing district in the country, and were among the oldest collieries working in the country. Durham had been working for very many years, and he certainly thought they had carried on their work there in as safe and practical a way as any coal-producing district could. If they looked at the loss of life which took place in Northumberland and Durham they would find that they compared most favourably with other districts. In Durham and Northumberland at the present time the hewers did not work on the average more than from six to seven hours, and if the existing hours were to be shortened the probability was that the men would be so pushed to earn a living wage that they would neglect the ordinary precautions for preserving their own lives and limbs. To make this a compulsory Bill applicable to the North of England would also put the coalowners at a great disadvantage in the selling of their coal. Already they had very great difficulty in maintaining their trade owing to the strong and active competition to which they were subjected in all parts of the world. The export trade of Durham was about 50 per cent. of the whole, and it was all to districts where this keen competition existed. Large collieries were now open in Australia, New Zealand, China, and elsewhere, and in his own experience he had seen the Northumberland and Durham coalowners lose one market after another. The South American markets had almost disappeared owing to the competition of New Zealand and Australia, and he had been told the other day by a large merchant that the time was not far distant when the whole of the coal used east of the port of Aden would be produced by India, China, Japan, and Australasia. Comparing the production of this country with Australia, Germany, Japan, China, and the United States, since 1883 the United Kingdom had gone up from 160,000,000 to 183,000,000 tons, while those other countries had gone up from 210,000,000 to 296,000,000 tons. Under these circumstances nobody could deny that foreign competition played a most important part in connection with this question. Notwithstanding that freights had so largely decreased, there was the utmost difficulty in maintaining our hold on foreign markets, and foreign competition was as real in coal as it was in agriculture or any other industry that now felt the weight of competition with the foreigner. The County of Durham had also special claims to consideration, because it had large manufactories which were entirely dependent upon the price of coal, and then again, upon those manufactories hundreds and thousands were dependent for their daily bread. Surely at a time like this—when every industry was suffering from depression—it was most unwise to have promoted a Bill like the present. Another strong claim that Durham and Northumberland had was that their methods of working their mines were altogether different to those which prevailed in other parts of the country. It was true that boys in those mines worked 10 hours a day, but it was a gross libel to describe them as galley slaves. Theirs, however, were not the only districts in which the boys were worked 10 hours underground. [An hon. MEMBER: "No."] There were many boys in the district represented by the Member for Ince who worked 10 hours, and there were great advantages in the Durham system over theirs. They were far healthier, stronger, and happier than the hands employed in manufacturing towns; and as soon as they reached the age of 19 or thereabouts and became hewers, they only worked about 6½ hours per day. The boys who work exceptionally hard were the hand-putters, but they formed only a very small proportion of the boys employed in the Durham mines, and they had inducements to work hard, for they were on piece-work and earned good wages. If the boys in the Durham and Northumberland mines were compared with those employed in the factories of his hon. Friend the Member for Ince and in other factories, it would be found that the former were the stronger and healthier. Out of 100 occupations, at the head of which stood that of the clergyman, there were only 30 showing longer lives than that of the coal miner. Then, again, there could be no doubt that the adoption in Durham and Northumberland of a compulsory eight hours' system would greatly increase the cost of production. He admitted that there must be a limit, but he maintained that they were carrying the limit too far. He found that in 1890 two-thirds of the pits in Durham were working practically 11 hours a day. They decided to reduce that to 10 hours, and it entailed a good deal of discussion, because it was thought that it would be a very serious charge in the shape of cost. What had been the result? In one colliery, particulars of which he had with him, there were 325 men employed in 1890, and it required 390 men to get exactly the same quantity. Another colliery produced 358,000 tons in 1890, and in 1891, with the reduction, they produced only 321,000 tons. These were facts which the Committee could not get over. Taking the County of Durham, what was the effect produced? In 1890 the amount produced in the County of Durham was 30,265,000 tons, and in order to do that 86,799 men were employed. When two-thirds of the collieries reduced their working time one-half, the quantity produced was 29,807,000—showing a reduction of 457,000 tons, while the increased number of men employed was 5,789. So that to get a decrease of 1½ per cent. they were obliged to employ 6 per cent. more men. Between 1888 and 1891 Durham increased its output to 142,000 tons, while he found that in Yorkshire they increased the output to 2,213,560 tons. One undoubted effect of the shortening of the hours would be to injure seriously all the old and weakly men who were hewers, and who could not put on the additional power of work that shorter hours would entail. The tendency would be to drive employers to select young and sturdy men, to the great detriment of the older hands, to whom at the present time every leniency and consideration were shown. It had been said by some of its friends that the Bill was promoted with a view to avoiding strikes, but in the North of England he believed it would rather have a tendency to promote them. In the North they had now Conciliation Boards and Joint Committees who were able amicably to adjust matters as between employers and employed. How would it be if such a Bill as this were passed? It would destroy to a large extent the value of the work done by these Conciliation Boards during the past 20 years.

MR. ROBY (Lancashire, S.E., Eccles): I rise to Order, Sir. May I ask whether the hon. Member is speaking to the Amendment?

SIR J. JOICEY: May I ask, Sir, whether I am not showing cause why Durham should be excluded from the Bill?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question is, whether you are to put this power in the hands of the majority of the workmen employed in any district.

*SIR J. JOICEY said, he was showing that Durham had a very strong claim to local option, but he was not surprised that his hon. Friends, the supporters of this Bill, who produced no argument and illustration of their own, should exhibit impatience when it came from the other side. They seemed to think they could as easily make upon Northumberland and Durham the impression which they had made upon Her Majesty's Government. If he were not to do his duty, and to strongly represent the case of Durham as he was striving to do, the probability was that somebody else would represent Chester-le-Street after the next Election. He was sent to Parliament because he understood mining questions, and so long as he had a seat in the House he would not hesitate to express his opinion upon such questions. What would this Bill do? There were only three methods by which it could be worked. The first would be to have one shift, which meant a complete departure from and a complete break-up of the whole system that now existed in Northumberland and Durham. He was sure the men would never consent to such a change. The second plan would be to adopt two shifts of men and two shifts of boys, but here there was the difficulty that they could not get the number of boys that would be required, so that there was little or no chance of working a double-shift system. The third alternative would be to have three shifts of men and two shifts of boys, which was equally impracticable, and he maintained that however they strove to apply this to Northumberland and Durham in many of the old pits all plans were equally impracticable. He opposed the Bill because he believed it would seriously injure the Counties of Durham and Northumberland. He maintained that the House of Commons ought to listen to the voice of 120,000 men in the Counties of Durham and Northumberland whom this Bill would affect. The miners of the North had a perfect right to manage their own domestic affairs—quite as much right as the people of Ireland. Was it to be supposed that the thrusting upon them against their will of such a Bill as this would increase their respect for the law? He did not wish to utter threats, but it was quite possible that if 120,000 men made us their minds to ignore a law of this kind Parliament would hesitate before it attempted to thrust that law upon them. He opposed this Bill because he believed it was unequal in its burden upon the country and unjust in its application so far as the North of England was concerned, and he should not cease to oppose it in every possible way, because he believed that in so doing he was not only carrying out the wishes of the people he represented, but that his action would be for the advantage of the whole country.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said, he had the misfortune not to be in sympathy on this question with his colleagues in the representation of Durham, but observations he had been able to make during a not limited period had convinced him that among the miners of the county there was daily growing a sense of sympathy with the objects sought by the promoters of the Bill. No doubt the progress of that sentiment had been to a large extent checked, and properly checked, by the great authority and not undeserved influence of those who were the leaders of the miners; but notwithstanding that properly-exercised influence and the great weight of the arguments that might be adduced against the application of an Eight Hours Bill to Durham, there was a growing feeling that it was only just and reasonable that the Legislature should intervene for purpose of assisting the miners in other districts of England to obtain that fair measure of labour which combination had hitherto been unsuccessful in securing for them. It was a remarkable fact that the most powerful and leading advocates of the application of an eight hours law were to be found amongst those who were formerly opposed to any legislative interference at all, and as an instance of that he need only mention one name, that of Mr. Cowie, the respected representative of the miners of Yorkshire, who had been convinced by the experience of recent years that combination by means of Trade Unions was entirely incompetent to grapple with the question. He was bound to say at the outset that he did not concur with the strong observations made by the the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyne, as to the "galley slave-like" treatment of boys underground. He agreed that 10 hours' work for lads underground as compared with the 7½ or 8 hours worked by the men was an invidious distinction, and one which ought to be abolished, seeing that it necessarily clashed—as was graphically stated at the Miners' Conference—with the sentiments of the boys themselves. In these days when the Imperial Government and Local Authorities were striving to bring education of a high standard within the reach of the humbler classes it certainly was antagonistic to the efficient working of the educational system that boys should be kept in the mines for the long period of 10 hours, and he believed that the miners of Durham themselves had awakened to the conviction that it was an improper thing that their boys should be allowed to work such long hours.

Mr. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Might I ask what reasons the hon. Gentleman has for making that remark?

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES said, his hon. Friend challenged him to state his authority. He thought he could give ample and most conclusive reasons for the statement. He had frequently spoken at meetings in his own constituency against the system of allowing boys to remain in the pit so long, and the miners had always received his observations with sympathy.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Is that all the proof you have?

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said, he had not had the opportunity of consulting every individual miner, and he frankly admitted that he could not give any further proof; but he thought his experience was sufficient to show that the miners of Durham were awakening to a sense that 10 hours was an excessive period for boys to work underground. He would like to add that he was perfectly certain that if the hon. Member who had interrupted him or the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland believed for a moment that the boys were suffering under any grievous wrong, they would be the first to raise their voices against a continuance of it. He fully acknowledged that they did not believe any such wrong existed. He had listened with interest to the Debate which had been carried on by those who were intimately associated with the coal industry of this country, and he had noted—as no doubt others had done—what had been said as to the danger likely to accrue to mining if this measure were carried. The very same arguments against legislative interference with labour were adduced in 1872 on the occasion of the Mines Act as had been advanced in that Debate.

MR. STOREY (Sunderland): Never by the men.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said, he was prepared to admit that legislation in the interests of adult male labour was a comparatively recent departure, but it was not altogether novel. It had been found necessary for the Legislature to interfere in respect of the Employers' Liability Act to prohibit men from contracting themselves out of its provisions, and in the Coal Mines Regulation Act it had been found necessary to insert stringent Rules. He might multiply these instances of legislative interference with adult male labour. But that was not the point he wished to speak upon. He wished to deal more particularly with the employment of boys over long hours.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That is not the point of the Amendment, which raises the question of local option.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES said, the reason why local option was demanded was that the retention of boy labour in its present form was necessary, and could not be done without. Therefore, he submitted that the point he was making was pertinent to the Amendment. He would only say further, with regard to the interference of the Legislature in this matter, that in 1872, in the course of the Debate on the Mines Act, they were told by Sir George Elliott, a most distinguished member of the trade, that it would be a grievous wrong to the coal industry of Durham if the boys' hours were limited, and he added that he was prepared to pit the boys of Durham against against any who might be produced from other parts of the United Kingdom. Indeed, following the same line of the hon. Member for Durham, he spoke of them as skipping like March hares when they left the pits.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): When did I use such poetical language?

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I only said the observations followed the same line. He ventured to suggest that unless they could have put before them—chapter and verse—some intelligible grounds for assuming that a measure of the kind now before the Committee were passed disastrous consequences would follow in contradistinction to the results which accrued from similar legislation in 1842 and in 1872—unless the opponents of the Bill were prepared to prove that the results they depicted were certain to follow, then the Committee was entitled to treat their arguments with as little respect as the effects of the 1842 and 1872 legislation justified them in treating the arguments advanced in those years. It was curious to note the community of feeling on this subject between men who had the interest of the working classes so much at heart, and those who represented the capitalists of the county. He could not help thinking that that feeling was due to the fact that the coal trade of Durham could be carried on on a more economical basis under the present system than the trade of other districts could. The output in Durham in 1890 was 368·4 tons per man, while in Lancashire it was only 268·6 per man; and the selling price of coal in Durham was, in

1889, 5s. 9d. per ton, as compared with 6s. 6d. in Lancashire and, he believed, in Yorkshire. Then it was obvious that this system of short hours for the men, combined with long hours for the boys, had managed to work very economically and very effectively in the County of Durham, and had enabled the county to trade to better advantage than other districts. Under the unequal conditions at present existing as between Durham and the other coal-producing districts of Great Britain, the latter were certainly able, substantially and practically, to hold their own. But while he made those observations in favour of the general principle of the Bill, he did not see any adequate reason why the system of local option should not be adopted. He had listened with attention to his hon. Friend the Member for Ince in order to find out what strong reasons he could advance against the permitting of local option. The hon. Gentleman stated that unless the conditions in different districts were equal, one district would be subjected to the temptation of working longer hours in order to compete with other districts. But unequal conditions already existed. Unequal geological conditions, unequal hours of work, unequal rates of pay, unequal facilities for haulage all existed as between the various coalfields; but, notwithstanding those varying conditions, it was found that the coalfields of Lancashire and Yorkshire and Wales enjoyed a trade which did not appear to run the slightest risk of being materially injured by the system prevailing in Northumberland and Durham. He did not think it was fairly to be expected that if local option were adopted there would be any fitful or capricious change in the manner of working coal in order to enable a district which was not within the magic circle successfully to compete with the districts which were within it. The hon. Member for Morpeth had recently told them that of the miners of Northumberland, 11,840 worked less than eight hours per day, and 15,874 more than eight hours. Of course, that included boys, and so forth. The figures given by the hon. Baronet the Member for Barnard Castle were to the effect that only 53 per cent. of the miners in Durham were coal-hewers, and the remaining 47 per cent., he took it, were men who worked more than eight hours a day. He repeated that while in sympathy with the principle of the Bill, he did not feel at liberty to vote against an Amendment which, in the belief of a very large number of persons immediately interested, would be disastrous to the industrial interests of Northumberland and Durham; but he believed that if the Bill were first made applicable to those districts desiring it—which would be Lancashire, Yorkshire, Staffordshire, and probably the bulk of South Wales—it would be found that before very long there would grow up in Northumberland and Durham a strong conviction of the advantages which would accrue to the community from a general adoption of the measure. For those reasons he pressed his hon. Friend to reconsider his determination to refuse to admit the principle of local option. He was sure that if his hon. Friend would admit that principle rather than allow the Bill to perish, he would be better serving his cause than if he endeavoured, in defiance of the opinion of a very large minority of those interested, to press the Bill through as it stood.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) said, that before he moved the Amendment which stood in his name he would like to controvert one or two of the statements of the hon. Gentleman who had last spoken, and who had endeavoured to make out that something like 50 per cent. of the men employed in Northumberland and Durham were working over eight hours. As a matter of fact, 71·54 per cent. of those who were employed in the County of Durham were working under eight hours, and 76·68 per cent. of those employed in the County of Northumberland were working under eight hours. It followed that the numbers who would be directly affected by this Bill would be 28·46 per cent. in Durham, and 21·32 per cent. in Northumberland. Another statement which the hon. Member made was that in the County of Durham 368 tons of coal per man per annum were raised and sold at 5s. 9d. a ton, whilst in Lancashire 268 tons per man per annum were produced and sold at 6s. 6d. per ton. On these figures the hon. Member had based an assertion that in the County of Durham employers were more eager to produce fuel economically; but when the hon. Member made that assertion, he was undoubtedly misleading the House, and showing a want of knowledge of facts which should be well within the knowledge of a Representative of Durham. The coal in the County of Durham differed materially from the coal in many other parts of the country. It was, to a large extent, soft coal and brittle coal, and nobody was going to pay for coal of that kind the prices which they would pay for hard round coal. This was a sufficient answer to the figures which the hon. Member had chosen to make use of. The hon. Member also alluded to the ballot which had been taken in Northumberland and Durham on the subject of this Bill. In that ballot 56·6 of the miners voted against the Bill, 26·3 for it, and 21·1 were neutral, many, of course, being absent from causes over which they had no control, and some being employed at the time. Of those actually voting 66·6 voted against the Bill and 33·3 in favour of it, so that there was a majority of 2 to 1 against it. Those who voted, he might add, included all boys over the age of 16.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea): Eighteen.

MR. J. A. PEASE said, he thought the age was 16, but he accepted the correction. He claimed that these figures were very significant. Side by side with them the fact was to be borne in mind that in the district of the Miners' Federation the men had never been balloted at all. The inference which he drew was that the Miners' Federation knew the weakness of their position, and that any figures they might obtain would not tell in their favour. Some indication of the feeling amongst the miners generally was, however, afforded by the Birmingham Conference. From what occurred at the Conference he was led to conclude that only one-third of the total number of men employed underground who were represented were in favour of the Bill; and that was the only public indication they had of a reliable character as to the extent to which the Bill was approved by the miners themselves. Some figures, however, also appeared in the Labour Commission's Report which indicated what were the views working men themselves took of the Bill. In 1890, at the Liverpool Trades Union Congress, 193 delegates voted for legislative interference and 155 against, while 109 were neutral. Three years afterwards, when the Congress was held at Belfast, the 193 for legislative intervention had dropped to 92, and the 155 against had fallen to 80, but the 109 neutral had increased to 265. Those figures went to show that there was no marked interest taken by those represented at the Trades Union Congress in the promotion of the Bill. He had never understood why the Federation refused to give evidence before the Labour Commission, unless it was that its leaders felt they would not be able to stand cross-examination. An experienced man, an engineer who had looked into the question, wrote to him some few months ago, not with a view to publicity, but because he (Mr. J. A. Pease) had asked for his opinion as to whether the adoption of an Eight Hours Bill for miners was practicable in the County of Durham, and that gentleman declared that, from whatever point of view the question was looked at, it seemed to him that the first effect of such a measure would be to reduce wages. If the Bill passed through Parliament without the addition of the local option principle he believed it would produce frightful misery in the County of Durham, and although the hon. Member for Eccles might think that a large number of the Representatives of Northumberland and Durham were speaking on the question, it must be remembered that it was one which vitally affected their constituents, and they felt bound to raise their voices in that House and do their best to protect those constituents and the livelihood they earned at so much risk. If the Bill passed as the hon. Members for Eccles and Ince desired that it should be passed, either it would become as much a dead letter as the Eight Hours Mining Bill had become in the United States, or the miners in the North of England would refuse by tens of thousands to conform to its provisions, and a nice position the Home Secretary would be placed in if he was called on to build a gaol for the honest, hard-headed, and industrious working men of the North of England. The number of boys in Northumberland and Durham was 16,090, and of those 6,000 were under 16. They, he admitted, were underground for 10 hours, and he regretted it, as did everyone who had anything to do with the coal industry in those counties. But even though they might wish to find some means of reducing the hours worked by those boys underground, it was desirable to look at the matter from a practical point of view. Taking, as an example, one large colliery in which 659 men and boys were employed, he found that the average time taken up in travelling to and from work underground was an hour and 16 minutes, while the interval during which the boys were not on duty was an hour and 13 minutes, so that they were only actually on duty for seven and a-half hours. He would put it to hon. Members who sympathetically viewed the position of the boys in Northumberland and Durham whether it was better that those boys should for three or four years perform 10 hours' work underground—many of them having practically only light work to perform—and for the rest of their lives should work seven hours underground, or that for the whole of their lives they should be employed for eight hours hard and fast. The boys did not suffer physically during those three or four years, and although he and others would like to see the number of hours reduced, he believed that, taken altogether, the system was beneficial for men and boys. Some experiments were, however, being conducted with a view to reducing the hours during which boys worked, and he was not sure that negotiations would not be entered into very shortly with a view to securing by voluntary arrangement some further reduction. Conciliation would, however, be needed on the part both of men and employers; and it might also be that some sacrifice would have to be made by parents if the hours were to be reduced without a material increase of the cost of the work. However that might be, he believed that a voluntary arrangement would enable the Counties of Northumberland and Durham to carry on their mining industry not only to their own satisfaction, but in a way which would not compete injuriously with other districts which might approve of the Bill, and wish to place themselves within its scope. The Reports of the Labour Commission stated that coal-mining presented a range and variety of conditions such as could be found in few other industries, and he thought it unfortunate that it should have been selected for such an experiment as that proposed by the Bill. The measure seemed to him, in fact, a Bill to restrict output, and such restriction must mean a lessening of the production of wealth which the community desired should be distributed among its members in the shape of food, clothing, shelter, and wages. He believed, whatever might be the fate that night of the local option Amendment, that if it had been considered earlier in the Session, it would, without doubt, have been carried, and that it was only because of the late period to which the discussion had been driven, that there was any danger of the Amendment being lost. He begged to move, as an Amendment to that Amendment, that the words "two-thirds majority" should be substituted for "a majority." There was, he submitted, some precedent for placing at that figure the majority which should decide whether the Bill should apply to a particular district. In the coal-mining industry in his own county it was required that there should be a two-thirds majority before a strike could take place; and a two-thirds majority was mentioned also in the Local Option Bill of the Government with respect to the liquor traffic. There were some advantages in having something more than a bare majority of one, since it would secure stability and firmness, and promote satisfaction when the arrangement had been arrived at. On those grounds he moved the Amendment, but the point was one of detail, and he would be guided by the sense of the Committee with regard to it.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 1, after the word "majority," to insert the words "of two-thirds."—(*Mr. J. A. Pease.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'of two-thirds' be there inserted in the proposed Amendment."

MR. FORWOOD (Lancashire, Ormskirk) thought no Member of the Committee who, like himself, had sat through the whole of the Debates for two days past, but would allow that the discussions had been most important and interesting, largely conducted as they had been by Members more or less directly interested.

THE CHAIRMAN reminded the right hon. Gentleman that the only question before the Committee was whether "two-thirds" should be part of the Amendment.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON pointed out that the decision by two-thirds majority was a very well-known system, and it would, if adopted, meet the requirements of the South Wales districts. Unless the local option principle was favourable, he considered the Bill would be the cause of great injustice to the colliers of South Wales, and of an amount of misery of which the hon. Member who introduced the Bill had no knowledge. Only last year he happened to pass through the South Wales colliery districts, and there he found a number of colliers who had been driven from their work simply at the orders of agitators' paid delegates. They could give no reason for having left their work, but they had given up their weekly wage, their wives and children had been reduced to semi-starvation, and their state of misery might have been avoided if only the local option two-thirds majority system had been in operation directing their conduct. The hon. Member for Rhondda knew perfectly well the miserable state of things brought about by the paid agitators.

MR. ABRAHAM: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: The only question before the Committee is that of "two-thirds" or "bare majority."

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON said, if the two-thirds majority had been adopted as the system for giving effect to local option, then such strikes as that to which he had just alluded would not have taken place, and the misery and desolation over the district would not have followed. The same principle applied under this Bill would save the men from the consequences of hastily yielding to the influence of agitators.

SIR F. MILNER (Notts, Bassetlaw) said, it was remarkable that the Committee received no advice on this important subject from Members of a Government who found time at the end of a weary Session for an important measure such as this, but did not take the trouble to assist in the discussion, and allowed the Treasury Bench to be empty for hours. It was only to be expected that a champion of local option like the Chancellor of the Exchequer should join in the discussion and support the proposal, and yet in common with the Irish Members he took no part in discussion and probably would merely give a vote against the Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN reminded the hon. Member that discussion should be confined to the question of "two-thirds" or "bare majority."

SIR F. MILNER said, the few remarks he had to offer were in support of the Amendment. The feeling of the mining classes generally had not been properly appreciated. It had been said by the opponents of the Amendment that the vast majority of the Miners' Federation were opposed to anything in the nature of local option. As he was given to understand that only the question of a two-thirds majority could now be alluded to, and that he could not enter upon the Amendment generally, he would only say that he had great pleasure in supporting the proposal for the two-thirds system as the only fair solution of the question when put to a district.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said, he had considerable sympathy with the Amendment, but he would suggest to the hon. Member that, in the interest of those who desired to express themselves on the Main Question, the Amendment should be withdrawn.

MR. J. A. PEASE said, he did not wish to insist on the Amendment, though there was more to be said in its favour than against it. In deference to the general view he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question again proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. FORWOOD said, as the Amendment now before the Committee was as to the adoption of the principle of local option in the application of the Bill, he, as one having no interest in the great industry immediately concerned, desired to explain the reasons that influenced his vote. He found great difficulty in deciding upon the vote he should give. To his mind the clause as it stood and the clause with the Amendment would be almost equally objectionable. In the one case, by the clause being passed unamended Parliament would deprive the labouring man of the liberty to work for such hours as he thought proper, and under the Amendment this power would be given to the majority of the labourers in a given district. Under the Amendment, if it became law, there would have to be constituted an entirely new Register of voters with special qualifications in regard to this matter, and he felt there would be great difficulty in the plan. At the same time, he was strongly opposed to a cast-iron rule in regard to working hours or other regulations of adult male labour, and therefore preferred the greater elasticity the Amendment would afford in various districts. In the Amendment, and, indeed, in the Bill, it was assumed that there was only one party to the contract, the *employés ;* and the votes of the *employés* were, under the Amendment, to decide whether the Bill should be applied. But surely the employer had a large interest in the question ? He, under the security of existing law, embarked his capital in the business, sinking a large amount in building, plant, &c., and under the Bill and Amendment the employer would be exposed by *ex post facto* legislation to have altogether new conditions imposed to handicap him in the conduct of his business. The Bill, whether with or without the Amendment, was a form of veiled protection, and protection in the most unscientific and clumsy form. It proposed to give to the workman protection in regard to the time for which he might sell his labour, forcing the purchaser of that labour to pay more for it, and so in a sense this was a system of protection. Just in the same way as a farmer who had wheat to sell might have protection for the labour by which he raised that wheat, so would, by the Bill, protection be given to miners' labour. But it was protection in a clumsy and unscientific form. The men were to be prevented from working more than a given number of hours, although health, strength, and inclination might induce them to extend those hours, and yet, at the same time, they would be exposed to all the competition of foreign labour and to that competition increased. Scientific protection placed a duty upon imported goods, and thus gave protection to home labour; but here was the labour left exposed to foreign competition, and protection was simply for the purpose of levelling up or levelling down the hours of labour in the various districts of the country. It had not been realised what an increased charge would be levied on trade industry and every household in the country. It had been said by the hon. Member for Merthyr, in the speech in which he quoted from the hon. Member for Rhondda, that the passing of the Bill would give employment to 20,000 more miners in South Wales to produce the same quantity of coal as was produced without this restriction. This was confirmed by a supporter of the Bill, who stated that the effect of the Bill would be to raise the cost of getting coal in all cases 4d., and in some cases more, per ton. The hon. Baronet (Sir J. Pease) estimated the extra cost of getting coal if the Bill were adopted at 6d. per ton, and, translating this fact into figures, this extra 6d. per ton in the production of coal, taking the total production in the United Kingdom to be 180,000,000 tons, meant an increase to the consumers of no less than £4,500,000 in the course of the year. The House should not lightly propose such an immense additional charge on the industry and everyday expenses of the country by a measure hurriedly passed immediately before the close of a long Session. Another figure would illustrate the effect of the Bill. One of our keenest competitors was the United States, and 6d. per ton would pay the carriage of coal in that country for 120 miles. To that extent, therefore, the Bill would carry back the area of our coalfields from the port of shipment. This was no idle fear, as would be shown by the figures in reference to the competition between British and foreign coal producers. Coal could be delivered to steamers in the port of New York at 11s. 6d. per ton, delivered alongside the vessel, but that coal could not be delivered in the port of London for less that 16s. or 17s. per ton. We pretended to ourselves that we had cheap coal, through which our industries flourished, but we would, by the Bill, add 6d. per ton to the cost of producing coal, while there was the enormous discrepancy existing in the cost of coal in those two great commercial ports. Why was the Bill urged with such vehemence ? No one had ventured to say that coal mining was an unhealthy occupation, and in the face of established facts such a statement could not with truth be made. The proportion in the total number of miners of men employed up to the age of 60 was larger than in any other industry. The only valid argument in favour of the Bill was contained in the half-and-half speech of one of the hon. Members for Durham, who first led his hearers to suppose that he was going to oppose the Amendment, basing his opposition on the employment of boys, and who finished by saying he would support the Amendment. If it were true that boys were employed in any of our coal mines for unfairly long hours, he would vote for an inquiry into that matter, and, if necessary, would support legislation in the boys' favour, similar to that already passed in favour of women and children employed in factories and workshops. That, however, should be dealt with separately and distinctly, and afforded no reason for such a Bill as this with its effect on trade and industry throughout the whole country. He felt that if once this step were taken, with or without the introduction of the local option principle, similar legislation could not be refused to other industries when asked for. There had been indications in discussions at Working Men's Congresses of the set of ideas in this direction——

Mr. PRITCHARD-MORGAN rose to Order. The hon. Member was not addressing himself to the Amendment; he was considering what might possibly happen should the Bill become law.

The CHAIRMAN understood the right hon. Gentleman to be arguing for the Amendment and against the Bill.

Mr. FORWOOD said, he preferred the Bill with the Amendment, although with the Amendment adopted his objection would not be removed, as it would afford some degree of elasticity to the operation. His strong objection to the Bill with the Amendment was that, if it passed, it would encourage other claims, which could not be resisted, for similar legislation in the interest of other industries. Parliament had no right to impose on workmen in this country an additional tax on coal for household use (which would also affect wages in regard to the cost of coal for manufacturing purposes), and yet refuse to other workmen the same protection to labour as would by the Bill be extended to miners. If the Bill as amended were proceeded with——

The CHAIRMAN reminded the right hon. Gentleman that the Bill as amended was not before the Committee; the Question simply was whether the proposed Amendment should be adopted.

Mr. FORWOOD bowed to the ruling, but in following the course of the Debate he had heard the question of foreign competition discussed. The Bill would increase the cost of production, and in the result would affect this country unfavourably in regard to foreign competition as well as seriously and prejudicially affecting the home consumers. In deference to the Chairman's ruling he would not further press that point, but he apprehended he would not be out of Order in alluding to the argument put forward by the promoters of the Bill against the Amendment, that it was desirable to put mines in every district upon a somewhat equal level. In other words, as the mines of Northumberland and Durham were at the present time working more economically and with greater advantage to the miners than were mines in other parts of the country, therefore a Bill should be passed which would handicap those mines, and put them on a level with mines in the Midland districts. Against such a proposition he supported the Amendment; but should the Amendment become part of the Bill, he should vote against the Bill in its ultimate stage, believing that to pass such a Bill would be one of the worst day's work the House could do for the interests of the working classes of the country.

*Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth) said, only a few words would be necessary to explain why he should vote in favour of the Amendment. He voted for the Second Reading of the Bill with the intention of supporting certain Amendments in Committee, of which this was one. He had no interest in the coal trade, but he had a considerable number of miners in his constituency who, he believed were largely, if not unanimously, opposed to this local option proposal. He would like to please those mining constituents of his by the vote he gave, but he was quite unable to see that in order to please them he should vote for putting a burden on a large number of men in other places who believed that it would result injuriously to themselves, their employers, and the public interest, The Bill with this Amendment would give those who desired the change the opportunity of getting it, but he could not think it fair to forcibly impose the Bill on large minorities who did not desire it. This was his reason for supporting the Amendment, and he was not deterred from giving that support by the threat that if the Amendment were carried the Bill would be withdrawn. The responsibility for the loss of the Bill must rest with those who withdrew it, not upon those who desired these modifications in its terms.

*MR. PRITCHARD-MORGAN (Merthyr Tydvil) said, he did not take the same view on this subject as his colleague in the representation of Merthyr. Either he or his hon. Friend must be mistaken in the estimate formed of the views of the miners of the district, but each was prepared to take the responsibility of the position taken up. This was somewhat beside the question, but it was evident that each was more or less honest in his convictions, and offered his opinion in the House for what it was worth. The immediate question was whether or not there should be any option in regard to the application of the Bill. The passing of the Second Reading of the Bill by a large majority established the principle that there should be legislative limitation of hours of work in mines, and the question now was should some districts be excepted from the general rule. In his view eight hours' hard and honest work in a mine was as much as any man could possibly do; after that he ought to have rest. What a man did in the way of work beyond that eight hours was of very little value to himself or his employers. He could speak with some knowledge on the subject, for mining had for him a life-long interest, and he did not hesitate to say that eight hours' work in a mine was all that could be expected from a man having due regard to his own health and the safety of those who worked with him. He submitted that no man should be allowed to work more than eight hours in the bowels of the earth, his own interests and those of his family being alike opposed to it. He could not shut his eyes to the fact that the reason of the opposition to the Bill was based on their knowledge that the men would have the cards in their own hands if the Bill passed, and would insist on being paid a fair day's wage for what they considered to be a fair day's work. He was quite prepared to admit that if the Bill passed into law the men would still insist on having a fair day's wage, and he held that they were entitled to it. He noticed that throughout the Debate they had heard nothing from the Representatives of Cornwall and Devonshire as to the metalliferous mines of this country. It was the rule in all metalliferous mines in the world that no man should work more than eight hours a day; why was it not the rule in coal mines? On that point he would try to throw some little light. He himself was not interested to the extent of one farthing in collieries, but he was a Representative, in conjunction with his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr, of a colliery district, and he had endeavoured to ascertain why the owners objected to the Bill before the Committee. The two grounds alleged were that it would restrict the output and that it would prevent competition with foreign producers. Well, the eight hours' limit could not restrict the output in Northumberland and Durham, where it was alleged that the men already only worked six and a-half and seven hours. But what happened in Northumberland and Durham? The boys and hauliers were sent down to arrange for the work of the day—to get the trams to the face ready for filling, and the roadways clear.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): I am sure the hon. Gentleman will excuse me for laughing; but this is the most amusing statement I ever heard in my life.

THE CHAIRMAN: I may call attention to the fact that the only question raised by the Amendment is whether there should be local option or not in respect of this Bill.

*MR. PRITCHARD-MORGAN said, he was endeavouring to give reasons why owners refused to assent to having the law made compulsory, and wished to have it left optional when he was interrupted by his hon. Friend, who apparently thought he did not know a mine from a mule, though probably he had been acquainted with mines almost as long as the hon. Gentleman. He thought it had been admitted all through the Debate that the boys in Northumberland and Durham were oftentimes engaged for 10 hours a day; and if that was the case it appeared obvious to a person of ordinary understanding that the boys were there for the purpose of facilitating the work of the men. What the miners of South Wales said, however, was that they desired that no one should be allowed actually to work in the mines for more than eight hours per shift. The hon. Baronet the Member for Chester-le-Street had stated as one of his grounds of objection to the Bill that in Northumberland and Durham the men would only be able to work one shift. The principal objection of his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr, however, was that, by a limitation of the hours of labour, the double shift system would be introduced in Wales. The Representative of one colliery district, in fact, objected to having one shift, while the Representative of another objected to having two.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): May I explain that in South Wales the boys work shorter hours than the men, and that if you introduce a double shift you increase the hours of the boys?

*MR. PRITCHARD-MORGAN replied that he was not born in Palestine; he was born in South Wales. With regard to the question of foreign competition, he submitted that if the Bill were passed they would be exactly *in statu quo*. Wages on the Continent at the present time were undoubtedly lower than they were in Durham or in Wales, and foreign competition thus was and would be possible; but to say that the men of Wales were of necessity to work a larger number of hours than they ought to be called on to work, due regard being had to their health, simply because some men on the Continent were working for very low wages, was, to his mind, a poor answer to the supporters of the Bill before the House. He had been surprised on the previous day by a passage in the speech of the Member for Merthyr, in which his hon. Friend somewhat misled the Committee, though not, he was sure, intentionally, by saying that a ballot had been taken in the constituency they represented, and that the men in that locality were, by a large majority, in favour of the application to the Bill of the principle of local option. The only vote that had ever been taken in the Merthyr district was as to whether the eight hours should count as from face to face or from bank to bank. There was not a collier in the Merthyr or Aberdare Valleys who was opposed, so far as he knew, to the reduction of the hours of labour in the collieries of South Wales—he had never even heard the question raised. His hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr advocated in 1891 eight hours from bank to bank; then he advocated eight hours' winding——

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): Where did I advocate that in 1891?

MR. KEIR HARDIE (West Ham, S.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but the Chairman withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

Debate resumed.

*MR. PRITCHARD-MORGAN, resuming, said, that his hon. Friend, after advocating eight hours' winding, advocated eight hours from face to face, and then eight hours within a radius of 100 yards from the bottom of the shaft, while now he advocated local option. He would put a case—a case, say, where men and owners had combined in objecting to the principle of the Bill. They would assume that 2,000 men were engaged in the pit, and produced 1s. per day in the value of coal more than they would in the event of the Bill becoming law. They would admit that those 2,000 men obtained an advantage of 6d. per man per day, and that the proprietor of the mine also obtained a similar sum per man per day. That advantage, in the case of the proprietor, would amount to no less than £15,000 a year; and he contended that it would be better to suffer the workman to lose his 6d. per day and the owner his £15,000 a year than to allow the men to remain in the bowels of the earth working amid the coal dust for objectionably long hours day after day and year after year. The House was continually engaged in legislation dealing with cruelty to animals and to children, and in restricting the hours of labour of women and infants, and he submitted that the time had arrived for restricting the hours of adult labour in the mines. He thought the Amendment ought not to be carried, and he trusted that the Committee would not carry it, though at a later stage he would be prepared to vote for an Amendment making the eight hours apply as from face to face.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): The Committee will, I think, feel indebted to the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down for breaking the monotony of the Debate. I do not know exactly how many speeches have been addressed to us this evening, but they are a great number, and, with one exception, every speaker has spoken in favour of the Amendment, while the promoters of the Bill have not ventured to say a single word against it. That appears to us to be rather an extraordinary method of conducting a discussion in this House, though I have no doubt that as time goes on we shall be entirely used to it. Apparently, with the new Unionism and new Radicalism, a new form of discussion has sprung up, and hon. Gentlemen who promote a Bill, having ascertained beforehand in the Lobby whether they have a majority at their back, remain obstinately silent, moving the Closure from time to time, and testing the patience of the Chairman, and in that way endeavour to ram their measures down the throats of their opponents without taking the trouble to explain them. Perhaps they are wise in that. Having to defend proposals such as this before the House, and having declared that even the slightest deviation from the proposals in the Bill is to be followed by its withdrawal, they are, perhaps, very wise to refuse to allow any discussion, any examination of details, or any criticism. I should hardly think that they will be very much obliged to my hon. Friend below me, because, although he rose to oppose the Amendment, he seemed to me to give away the whole case by the statement he made at the commencement of his speech. He said, and I entirely sympathise with him, that eight hours' good work at the face, in all the discomforts of a mine, was as much as any human being should be submitted to, and that he was prepared to alter the Bill, so that the only thing it would prevent would be work extending over a longer period than eight hours carried on at the face of the coal. Well, Sir, we are all agreed as to that. But that is not the issue between us. I have taken the trouble to look at the Returns prepared some time ago, and I find there is hardly a district in which at the present time the average of work at the face exceeds eight hours. Where eight hours is exceeded it is only by a decimal point, and I think there would, in no part of the House, be any objection to reducing it to eight hours. But we have a much larger question than that to decide. We are obliged to consider this Bill as raising the question whether all over the United Kingdom, as soon as this Bill is passed, work in mines is to be restricted to eight hours from bank to bank for everybody employed in the mine. We know perfectly well that that will, in many cases, reduce the work at the face to seven, six, and even five hours, and of course, therefore, greatly reduce the number of hours of *bonâ fide* work which can be put in at the mine. Now, Sir, I wish to address myself particularly to the promoters of the Bill, and I think I am entitled to do so as a friend of their object. I would remind them that in 1891, when they were in a small minority in this House, and when the very idea of legislative interference with the hours of labour was scouted in all parts of the House, I supported them and defended the principle of their Bill and voted for the Second Reading; but at the same time I said that whenever a Bill of this sort was read a second time I should claim my right to examine its details, and to endeavour to introduce into it that elasticity without which, I am convinced, it would disappoint its promoters, and fail of its avowed aim. But I adopted the principle of your Bill. My hon. Friend below me, in his speech against the Amendment, adopted the very convenient method, which I have noticed has been adopted by gentlemen who occupy a more prominent position, of saying that the Amendment violates the principle of the measure. That is a very convenient argument, because it dispenses with argument. You need only say "the Amendment violates the principle of the Bill," and then, because the principle has been affirmed on the Second Reading, you can add "I cannot discuss an Amendment which violates this principle." Let us ascertain what is the principle of the Bill. The principle of the Bill is, I venture to say, the right of the Legislature, under certain circumstances and for good cause, to interfere with the hours of labour of adults in mines. That is the principle of the Bill. Whether that right shall be exercised is purely a question of expediency, and this Amendment is purely a question of expediency and not a question of principle at all. It is a question of whether, granting that we have the right to interfere in any district or all districts, it is expedient to stereotype this interference over the whole country, or whether we should limit that interference to those districts which are most desirous of it, and where we may well be convinced by the evidence we have received that such interference will do little or no harm. Let us, then, look at the matter from that point of view. Is it expedient to press a measure of this kind against a small minority? I say for myself, yes, it is. It was with that view that I supported the Second Reading of the Bill. It is in that sense that I am in favour of compulsion in certain cases, where you have an individual or a few individuals, or a very small proportion of a class behaving in a cantankerous manner, and preventing something which the vast majority believe to be to their advantage. Then I hold that it is right for the State to interfere, and to give the majority the power of controlling a small minority. But does that principle go so far as to cover the case of a very large minority? I say no, and that I may explain the ground on which I base that opinion. I go to the very bottom of our representative system. What is a representative system? It is a means of learning beforehand on which side of a question force lies. Without our civilised arrangements every question must be decided by force, and the strongest, of course, gain their way. By means of a representative system you find out which party is the stronger, and we have always been content to accept the decision of the stronger party without resorting to physical force to determine the matter. But it will be seen at once that, although in a case where there is a majority of two to one Providence would no doubt be on the side of the big battalions, as Napoleon said, and the majority would win; yet when you come to a small majority it is not at all certain, if you come to force, that the majority will win. Is it contended that if you left this to be decided on the spot without legislation, without an appeal to law, in Northumberland and Durham, that the people who are in favour of this Bill would be able to carry it into effect? Clearly not. Unless you can bring the whole force of the country at your back to coerce the recalcitrant opponents of the Bill in Northumberland and Durham you could not possibly carry out your proposal in those countries. And even if you take the whole of the country there is undoubtedly a very large minority opposed to the Bill. If you take the miners in the North at 120,000 you must add a considerable number for those in South Wales and other districts, and my hon. Friend will admit that, although the Representative Bodies are on one side, there are a great number of individuals in places like the Midlands who are entirely opposed to this legislation. You have over the whole country a very considerable minority entirely opposed to this legislation. I do not say that that is a reason against the legislation—if I thought it was I should have voted against the Second Reading—but I do say that that is a reason why my hon. Friends should march cautiously. It is a reason why they should make some concession, and not stand in the irreconcilable attitude they have taken up. What is the objection that is taken to the Bill by this large minority? It is that the lessening of the hours that would take place in certain districts, especially in regard to the labour of boys in Northumberland and Durham, would very materially lessen the output of coal; that the result of that would be to raise prices; that that would lessen the demand for labour and the opportunities of the people for obtaining occupation and probably the amount of the wages they would receive. That is the statement which is made as to the probable result of this legislation in those districts, and it will be observed that everybody would suffer. The employer would suffer, no doubt. If he is making any profit he would have to submit to a sacrifice of those profits. The workman would have to submit to less wages and, above all, to a decrease in the amount of employment open to him, and the public probably would have to suffer, because the price of the article would be raised as far as it could be without materially affecting the demand. I do not want, myself, to lay too much stress on this argument. I pointed out on the Second Reading of the Bill that people are rather apt to take a too gloomy view of the probable result of changes of this kind; that the reduction in the output might not be so large as was feared; and that in many trades a reduction of hours had not led to a reduction of output. But then I venture to say that if that should be the result I do not think that the main object of the promoters of this Bill would be gained, because I cannot help thinking that one of their objects is to secure a reduction in the output—that is to say, that a certain number of men shall produce less coal than they do at present—and to secure that if the output is to be maintained it shall be by the employment of a larger number of men. Still, I admit that there may be some compensation in the case of a change of this kind, and it may be found that more work will be done per hour than is done at present. The hon. Member for the Ince Division said, "Oh, our ancestors heard the same story over 200 years ago, and you have cried 'Wolf' so often that we do not heed you when you call 'Wolf' now." I venture to say that attitude on the part of an influential representative of the working classes is a very dangerous attitude at the present time. My hon. Friend must see there is a point beyond which you cannot increase prices. It is an open question, which should be considered with the utmost care, whether you have reached that point in connection with the coal trade. Do not let us shut our ears to arguments which may be used in the matter. If we met every contention with the same blank denial and refusal to entertain it our commercial supremacy would sooner or later disappear. I say, speaking generally, and dealing only with the old-established, ordinary, and old-fashioned businesses of the country, which have no monopoly, and which hold no supremacy because of the possession of an invention, or something of that kind, that the margin of profit has at the present moment almost entirely disappeared. Many of them are being carried on at a loss; and when my hon. Friend says we have heard these jeremiads often before, and nothing has resulted, he is mistaken, for something has resulted, and whether our warnings were correct or not, it is certain that the trade of this country is worse than it used to be. The hon. Gentleman may be right in saying that the working classes have not suffered to any great extent; their wages are higher and better, and their work is less exhausting than it was 20 years ago; but at the same time the average percentage of profit obtained by the capitalist has been very materially reduced. That is a change which I am not sorry to have seen accomplished, only there must be a limit. Take the case of a person who has invested £100,000 in a mill and machinery, who finds he is no longer making a profit. He cannot close his mill at once; that would be a loss of capital; so he goes on working, even at a loss, hoping for an improvement, until the whole of his free capital has disappeared, and it is not, in fact, until he is bankrupt that the mill is closed and the workpeople go to join the ranks of the unemployed. I would urge the Committee not to treat this as a purely illusory danger, for it is a real danger which we ought always to have in view. When a vast change of this kind is proposed I think it behoves those who propose it to be certain of each step as they take it, to follow the ancient ways of Liberalism, and to be satisfied with half a loaf rather than have no bread, and to feel, at least, that the change is unlikely to do more harm than good. Experience has shown that gradual progress is infinitely safer for the country and infinitely better for the projects of reform we wish to promote, and I would entreat my hon. Friend, as one who is friendly to this movement, to consider whether he will not gain more by taking to-day a Bill which he can have at this moment, and which can be passed into law during the present Session, than he will by refusing every Amendment and insisting upon the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill? It appears to me that if my hon. Friend insists upon the Bill in its present form and at this period of the Session, he has not the ghost of a chance of passing it this year. Does my hon. Friend believe he will be able to pass the Bill in its present form during this Session? I do not know what the men of Northumberland and Durham are, but I know if they were Irishmen this Bill would take a month to pass. On the other hand, if he would allow this amendment to be made, without necessarily admitting the grounds or reasoning upon which it is urged upon him, reserving to himself the right to demand more when the opportunity comes, I believe he would secure a very useful

Bill, even at the end of this exhausting Session, and he would gain for all of us a vast amount of useful experience, which would enable us with absolute certainty to proceed further, or with equally absolute certainty to retrace our steps. What argument has been offered to us which would prevent them from adopting this course? There are three arguments. In the first place, there is the argument of the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, which is the philanthropic argument, and which amounts to this—that my hon. Friends behind me from the North are such inconsiderate fathers, and their sons have to work such long hours, that it is absolutely necessary that he from Staffordshire should step in and defend the health and material welfare of their children. I do not think we are at all justified in taking such an unfavourable view of the character of our Northern friends, and that, at any rate, is not such a serious argument as to be sufficient to induce us to make such a change as this. When we were asked to interfere in the case of the Factory Acts, the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, and other Acts, there was always shown a tremendous case of cruelty, indifference, and neglect affecting large numbers of the population which justified the interference of the Legislature, but there is nothing of the sort here. The boys in the North were strong and healthy, and he should think they would be the first to resent interference. The second argument is that if you pass this Bill with the local option clause, you will be giving an undue advantage to the districts which will vote themselves out of the Bill. In the first place, I wish to say I do not think that is true. Whatever advantages, if they are advantages, these districts will have after the Bill has passed, they have now, and the real object of gentlemen who hold this argument is not to prevent them from getting the advantages which they have got now, but to take away the advantages which they have got. Let me point out how that arises. You have extraordinary differences in the conditions of trade. You have mines in which the coal is much more expensive to win than it is in others, or mines which are far from markets, and which would not be able to be worked if the people had not in some way or other overcome the natural disadvantages. It is these methods which they have adopted for overcoming the natural disadvantages and putting them on equal terms with other districts, that you will take away from them. It is the most remarkable thing to notice how, in the course of these two days' Debate, the whole argument has been transformed from the argument on the Second Reading of the Bill. On the Second Reading it was to our common humanity that the promoters of the Bill made an appeal; it was said that men were working too hard and too long at a disagreeable and dangerous employment, and that therefore there should be some interference. But not one word, except from the Member for Merthyr, have we heard about the argument addressed to our humanity. What we have been listening to is ignoble strife and competition between different coalowners on the one side and coalowners on the other, between different districts and between individual mines, and I do say it is a most dangerous precedent if this House is going to interfere with a question of commercial competition, and is going to lay its strong hand on one set of tradesmen and take it away from another set of tradesmen. We have been looking with regret on the spectacle which has been presented to us by the Houses of the Legislature in America, where we have seen Senators and Representatives struggling for their personal interests or the personal interests of those whom they represent, without the least regard for the good of the nation. Are we going to follow that evil example, and are we going to throw ourselves into what has been shown by the whole course of the Debate to be a mere struggle between rival commercial and pecuniary interests in this country? Are we going to have to throw a balance into the one side or the other? No, Sir; on that ground, if on that alone, I would say we ought to press for this local option in order that these districts may fight it out themselves without asking the House to give a preference to one side or the other. There is a third reason which has not been alluded to in the course of this Debate, and which, I think, must weigh very materially with the Member for the Ince Division and other hon. Members in inducing them to reject anything in the form of a compromise, and that is the idea that by forcing a stereotyped eight hours throughout the country they will reduce the output, and that, as a result, either prices will go up and wages will be raised, or, if the output is to be maintained, a larger number of persons will find employment. I ask how on earth it can be expected that this result will be attained? Does the hon. Gentleman think he can fix the price of a product like coal? Can he altogether evade the effect of competition? Yet they would have us believe that they can force up the price. We have heard a great deal about competition. We have heard about foreign competition and foreign coal. No one, however, has considered it necessary to speak much about it during this Debate except to say that it was not so bad as it was expected to be. Surely, however, if you are going to increase the price of home coal it is clear that you will increase the demand for foreign coal, and that every ton of foreign coal sold means that one ton less of English coal sold, and so many more people out of employment. The commonest laws of economics cannot be voided for the benefit of my hon. Friends. But there is another point to be considered. Suppose you were dealing with the home trade, and that the foreign trade was not to be counted at all. In other words, suppose you could draw a circle excluding all foreign coal, then, no doubt, you could raise the price of coal. But, I ask, for how long? Surely you would keep the price up only so long as the consumers could afford to pay the increased price. But, again I ask, is the condition of trade throughout the country such that it could afford to pay an increase for the coal that it necessarily must consume? I am thinking especially now of the vast ironworks, and I say it is absolutely impossible for them, and also for many other great industries throughout the length and breadth of the land, to hold their own against foreign competition if the price of coal is to be increased. What would follow? These great centres of consumption would be closed. How then, in the long run, is this increase in the price going to benefit anybody? My view is that what the hon. Gentleman proposes to do—that is, to lessen the output and increase wages —is mathematically impossible. But I know that it is of no use to argue with those who hold these views. You cannot convince a man who thinks he can square the circle or make water run up hill. I do not press my opinion with any hope of bringing conviction; but I put it that supposing you are right and I am wrong, and supposing that good results would follow from your plan, still I would ask you why should not you, as you cannot get these results this year, consent to a compromise? You can gain nothing under the Bill this year, and if you agree to a compromise, we shall have a year's experience upon which to decide what is the best course for us to adopt in the future. The new method of discussing important matters seems to me, however, to render any appeal of this kind useless. I wonder how the hon. Baronet the Member for Barnard Castle (Sir J. W. Pease) and the hon. Member for Durham (Sir J. Joicey) like this state of things now that it is to be applied to themselves? They were very ready to Closure us on a former occasion after two days' discussion in Committee on an important Bill, and to-night we shall have been two days discussing this Bill, and I suppose to-morrow that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he is prepared to mete out equal justice to his friends as well as his opponents, will come forward again and stop further discussion by his guillotine method. I should like to know how those hon. Gentlemen will vote on that occasion? When my hon. Friend behind me, the Member for Mid Durham (Mr. J. Wilson) wanted, by the vote of this House, to coerce no less than 500,000 persons by the provisions of the Employers' Liability Bill, the hon. Baronet the Member for Barnard Castle strongly approved of the guillotine being applied on that occasion. It strikes me that some of these chickens are coming home to roost. I sincerely hope the lesson will not be altogether lost on some of my hon. Friends. I do not think I can do more than to once more ask those who have the conduct of this Bill whether they will not yield to circumstances, and take what they can instead of losing everything by claiming too much? If they will not do that I confess that the best course this House can take, and that another House can take, if they take my advice, which I do not suppose they will

—I say, if a majority in this House is determined to ram the measure down our throats, the best thing is to allow them to do it in the crudest possible form, because the sharper the lesson and the deeper the wound, the sooner shall we come back again to the policy of reason and common sense.

*SIR C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, although, no doubt, the Commttee would be anxious to divide, yet some reply would be expected from the promoters of the Bill to the powerful speech to which the Committee had just listened. His right hon. Friend began his speech by asking whether or not any serious Amendment was to be accepted, and whether this Amendment and other Amendments on the Paper would be opposed; and he seemed to say that this Amendment represented his views. There was a slip made by the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment yesterday in referring in terms of commendation to another Amendment which appeared on the Paper. The colleague of the hon. Member who made this Motion, and to whose speech the right hon. Gentleman alluded, said he should support another Amendment, which was one to which they would come later, and which placed a point of 100 yards from the shaft as that from which the eight-hours day should be taken. His right hon. Friend had stated that three arguments had been used in support of this Amendment, and he had traversed two out of the three at considerable length. He would first dispose of the argument of colliery against colliery, and one part of the country against another part of the country. They thought, without putting it too high, that there would undoubtedly be a considerable amount of inconvenience and some cost in all parts of the country in bringing the new system into effect. But changes of this kind had been imposed upon the coalowners of this country on former occasions, and they had been resisted, and resisted in very strong language—in 1872, when there were prophecies of the ruin of the industry, and again in 1887. They admitted that there would be cost and trouble, and they said it was unfair that the masters of Staffordshire and Lancashire and the Bristol districts, where the hours were long and the mode of working very slow—they said it would be unfair to put them to all this inconvenience when their rivals and competitors in trade were not inconvenienced in the same way. That argument was met by saying they were not competitors in trade. He could not admit that for a moment. The seaborne trade of Northumberland and Durham was very large, but a very large proportion of that coal arrived in London, and came into direct competition with the coal produced in Federation districts. It was owing to the high rates of the Railway Companies that this seaborne coal got the advantage. He laid much more stress upon the philanthropic argument of the right hon. Gentleman. He did not see how it would be possible for any of them who were concerned in promoting this Bill, and who had been supporting it for years past, without sacrificing every principle and argument, to give up the case of the Northumberland and Durham boys. It was said they should not express more concern for the boys in this district than did their fathers. As to carrying this change against the wishes of the great minority, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have forgotten his own arguments about minorities on former occasions. He admitted that it would be a serious thing, even in the name of philanthropy, to coerce a large minority. But he had exaggerated the matter. With regard to Northumberland and Durham, his hon. Friend the Member for Chester-le-Street (Sir J. Joicey) had referred to 120,000 men, but the last ballot taken on the subject showed that the majority was only 36,000.

*SIR J. JOICEY said, he had spoken of 120,000 men as being connected with the mines, and not as being miners.

*SIR C. W. DILKE went on to say that very large sections of Federation districts had been balloted upon this Bill, and in those sections there had been virtually no minority; whilst, on the other hand, in Northumberland and Durham the ballot showed 36,000 against the Bill and 14,000 or 15,000 in favour of it.

SIR J. PEASE: Out of 72,000 who were capable of voting.

SIR C. W. DILKE said, his point was that hon. Members ought not to quote 120,000 as being against the Bill when, as a matter of fact, only 36,000 voted against it. Then there was the question of the boys. The men in the North worked sometimes as little as five and a half hours, and never more than seven hours, as far as he had been able to ascertain, and he had been in pits both in Northumberland and Durham.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): What pit was the right hon. Gentleman down in Durham?

SIR C. W. DILKE: I will give my hon. Friend the names privately. In connection with this question I went down two pits in Northumberland and five or six in Durham.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck): Which were they?

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, his hon. Friend surely did not doubt his word upon the subject. He found that the men worked from 5½ hours to 6½ or 7 hours, while the boys were below ground 10 hours, and worked from 9 to 9½ hours. He understood that the case of the hand-putters was given up by his hon. Friends, who did not contend that the state of things with regard to them was defensible. There were very few of these handputters now, and they were confined to a few old-fashioned pits. The case of these handputters, however, was very hard. They worked naked, and their work was very hard.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not make us out to be greater barbarians than we are by saying that we work naked.

SIR C. W. DILKE: I saw men working naked with my own eyes. I admit that this work is confined to old-fashioned pits.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid): Will you name the pit where they work naked?

SIR C. W. DILKE said, Walker, near Newcastle, was a hot pit and an old fashioned pit. What had been ignored throughout the Debate was that the hours of the boys had been regulated by Statute. Many of the masters had complained of the introduction of the 54-hours week for the boys, but that provision was introduced, and the result was that they were not able to employ their boys now for more than 54 hours a week. One week in the fortnight the boys worked only 50 hours, but in the other week there had to be an extra shift of boys in order to take the places of the boys who otherwise would have to work overtime. The work of the boys was hard and dangerous, and when it was said that they were merely in charge of trains it must be remembered that in the course of their occupation they had to lift enormously heavy weights, and they developed a lifting capacity which no man could keep up to.

MR. J. WILSON (Durham, Mid.): They are all Sandows.

SIR C. W. DILKE said, the House had been told over and over again that eight hours were quite long enough to be below ground. These boys were 10 hours below ground, and they did work which was very severe indeed. His hon. Friend the Member for Durham (Mr. J. Wilson) and other supporters of the Amendment were committed to the view that this was a state of things which ought not to continue, and which it was the object of the Miners' Association in Durham to bring to a close. They offered no suggestion, however, as to how it was to be brought to a close, and this was why he (Sir C. Dilke) said it was impossible for the supporters of the Bill to avoid pressing the philanthropic argument.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had anything to say about the case of the boys in South Wales?

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he had nothing to say about them. He had dismissed the South Wales case by saying he was certain that the South Wales Members meant to support, not this Amendment, but another Amendment on the Paper. He knew that the feeling in South Wales, as far as there was a feeling there against this Bill, was a feeling against the eight hours bank-to-bank provision, and not against legislative interference. His hon. Friend the Member for the Wansbeck Division (Mr. Fenwick) had in 1887 spoken of work done by women on the pit bank of a very similar character to that done by the boys at the bottom of the pit as being very arduous. He knew that his hon. Friends the Members for Wansbeck and Morpeth (Mr. Burt) felt very strongly about the case of the boys. They knew that the boys did not get a fair chance, and that the present state of things ought to be brought to an end. The Members for Chester-le-Street (Sir

J. Joicey) and Barnard Castle (Sir J. Pease) said there was a difficulty in making any change in Northumberland and Durham. The witnesses from Northumberland and Durham before the Labour Commission never brought out the fact mentioned that evening, that there were 14 collieries working in Durham where a system that would easily adapt itself to this Bill was in force.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): The Labour Commission was quite aware of the fact, as they sent an inquiry both to owners and men.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, that was afterwards, and he thought it was in consequence of a letter from himself to the Labour Commission that the inquiry was made. There was not a word about it in Mr. Patterson's evidence, nor was any evidence given from Durham on the subject. All that was said was that the system proposed was not workable, and yet there were 14 collieries actually working on it—three shifts of men and two shifts of boys. The hon. Member for the Tyneside Division (Mr. J. A. Pease) had made a mistake in quoting the Labour Commission with regard to the neutrality of the Federation districts on this question. He had quoted an analysis of the votes of the Trades Congress at a meeting at Belfast. That analysis ought never to have been issued by the Labour Commission. The vote was taken at a very empty Congress without any debate, and, as a matter of fact, every single one of the delegates who were described by the Labour Commission as neutral were sent to the Congress to vote in favour of the resolution. As to the arguments about foreign competition, such competition was of entirely different kinds. As to the competition of France and Belgium, the mines in those countries were extremely deep, and we had nothing to fear from such competition, whilst in Germany the mines were far from the sea, and consequently the competition was not serious. As a matter of fact, the contracts for coals required for the German Army were now being made in this country. There was, however, quite a different kind of competition—that of Tonkin, Japan, New Zealand, India, and America in steam coal. Nothing that could be done in Great Britain could affect the development of such coalfields as these. They lay, many of them, on the route of trade, especially the Japan and Tonkin fields. Whatever was done here, those fields would be developed, and undoubtedly in course of time they would supply stations like Singapore even more largely than they did at present. It had been said that the promoters of the Bill intended to treat all alike—the strong and the weak, the old and the young, the man with 11 children and the bachelor. Well, were men at present allowed to choose their hours of work, and to work as long as they pleased? Certainly not; they were absolutely at the discretion of those who fixed the hours of the pit. The hon. Member for Chester-le-Street (Sir J. Joicey) had said that under the proposed new system the old men would not be able to continue at work, but he had known cases in which old men had not been allowed to continue at work because of that very county average to which allusion had been made.

SIR J. JOICEY said, there were exceptions.

*SIR C. W. DILKE said, he was very glad to hear it, and he hoped they were small exceptions. To conclude, he thought local option might be an excellent thing in such cases as shop hours, but was not applicable to a Bill of this kind. In his opinion, it would be better to risk the loss of the Bill for a year or two than to accept the Amendment now before the Committee. The principle of this Bill was that of a uniform eight hours all over the country. The question of what the eight hours meant was a question not of principle, but of detail. He should be willing to accept the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Merthyr (Mr. D. A. Thomas), although he was not favourable to it, rather than lose the Bill; but he thought it would be better to drop the Bill than to accept the Amendment now before the Committee.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) rose to continue the discussion, but

MR. WOODS (Lancashire, Ince) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 120; Noes 98.—(Division List, No. 231.)

Question put accordingly, "That those words be there inserted."

The Committee divided:—Ayes 112; Noes 107.—(Division List, No. 232.)

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I beg to move, Mr. Chairman, that you do now report Progress. I do so in order that we should hear a statement from the promoters of this Bill as to what they intend to do.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. J. Chamberlain.*)

Mr. ROBY: I beg to move that you do report Progress.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): The Motion was moved by my right hon. Friend for the purpose of extracting from the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill a statement, and all he has done is to make a Motion in his own name, which he is not competent to do. He has given no information on the subject in reference to which the Motion was moved.

Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): It has been stated frequently in the course of the Debate that it would be impossible to proceed with the Bill in these circumstances.

Motion agreed to.

Committee report Progress.

House resumed.

Mr. ROBY: I beg to propose that the Bill be put down for to-morrow, with a view of then withdrawing it.

Committee to sit again To-morrow.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

RESOLUTION.

***Mr. S. SMITH** (Flintshire) moved the following Amendment:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens; the nature of the Revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India."

He assured the House that he moved this Resolution with very great pleasure. He had taken a great interest in the people of India ever since he first visited that country more than 30 years ago, and his sympathy was very much increased by a late visit paid for political and social purposes. He did not move this Resolution, nor did his friends support it, in any spirit of antagonism to the British Government in India. Their desire was not to attack British rule there, but to improve it. They were all deeply sensible that no other form of Government was possible in India at the present time except the strong Government of Great Britain; and he believed he was expressing the opinion of all the educated people of India when he said there was a unanimous feeling that in the present state of Indian affairs the British rule should be predominant. But there was no doubt that there was a feeling of deep discontent with the working of this Government in many directions; and to these he wished to call the attention of the House. He would, in the first place, say that the Government of India was a pure bureaucracy. It was the only example in the whole world at the present time of the Government of a great country entirely by a bureaucracy. They might imagine what it would be like if the Government of the United Kingdom was in the hands of permanent officials without the direction of Parliament and without the control of a Ministry. The Secretary of State for India, who was thoroughly acquainted with official life, could form for himself a pretty good idea of what the Government of this country would be in the course of 100 years if it were entirely under the control of permanent officials. He held that the system of bureaucracy was in itself most imperfect. It necessarily produced a whole class of abuses peculiar to itself. The official classes looked upon themselves as a privileged class. They were drawn together by an *esprit de corps*. The tendency of all bureaucracies was to condone the faults of their members, and to whitewash the black sheep that might turn up amongst them; for in all bodies of men they had a certain number of black sheep. He willingly admitted that the British Indian officials were for the most part men of singular ability, and, as a rule, men of perfect integrity; yet he must sorrowfully admit that in late years there had been some very notable cases of black sheep among that bureaucracy. He might mention the notorious Crawford case in Bombay some few years ago. Wherever people were governed by a bureaucracy the tendency was for the officials to hold together, to form a sort of mutual admiration society, and to explain away and condone as much as they could the faults of each other. Now this system of bureaucracy was only possible under British rule in India when first established. The growth of Indian education and habits, of political thought, made this system of government more difficult than it was 50 years ago. The machine worked with increasing friction, and he feared it was beyond doubt there was far more discontent in India than there used to be. Under the old East India Company there used to be a Parliamentary inquiry every 20 years, but there had been none since the assumption of government by the Crown nearly 40 years ago. They held that the hour was ripe for such an inquiry, and it was promised in this House several years ago (1886) by the Government of the day. He should like to allude briefly to the points to which the inquiry should be directed. The main complaint of the Indian people was that our system of government was too expensive for a very poor country. He held that they were right. They did not comprehend the excessive poverty and the extremely small tax-paying power of that country. The vast majority of the people could only keep body and soul together; nine-tenths of the population were poor peasants just subsisting on patches of land of five acres or less, and they were never far removed from famine. A drought, or failure of crops, might at any time sweep away millions of the people. The average income of the population was £2 per head against £36, per head in England. One penny in the £1 of Income Tax produced over £2,000,000 sterling in the United Kingdom, and in India less than £200,000, though levied on six times as many people—that was to say, the average wealth of India liable to Income Tax was 1-60th of the amount available here on equal areas of population. Now our official system was very expensive; the higher posts were almost entirely filled by Europeans with high salaries. He did not say they were too high, looking at the difficulties and drawbacks of a tropical climate, but they appeared to the natives of India very high. To a native 100 rupees per month meant wealth, but our high officials drew salaries of 3,000 to 4,000 rupees per month, and the Indian people naturally thought that they could replace them by much cheaper agency. Then the military expenses were enormous, and constantly increasing. This was the abyss that swallowed up the resources of India. In 10 years they had risen from 18,000,000 to 24,000,000 of tens of rupees. The natives of India bitterly complained of the endless frontier wars, and of the tendency to push the outposts of the Empire further and further; above all, they objected to the policy on the North-West Frontier; they considered we were going much too far from our natural base. These military railways on the frontier of Afghanistan had swallowed up an enormous amount of money. The Indian accounts disguised the real expenditure. Some years ago he tried to make out the cost of the defensive works on the North-West Frontier, and reckoned it at £15,000,000 at least; probably it was much more now. It is extremely doubtful whether we were not on the wrong track altogether; we kept up constant friction with the frontier tribes, and made ourselves liable to endless frontier wars. Then the natives justly complain of our excessive pension list. It had grown to £4,600,000, including furlough allowances, equal to about 8,000,000 of tens of rupees—a prodigious draft on so poor a country as India. They also complained that our method of governing India caused an enormous balance to be annually due to this country. The Government had to pay some £16,000,000 or £17,000,000 annually in gold in this country as interest on debt for Army stores, pensions, &c., and, besides this, a large amount was remitted home by merchants for interest on capital invested in India, and for payments by officials for the support of their families in this country, the general result being that whereas Indian exports last year reached 110,000,000 of tens of rupees she only received back in imports 95,000,000 of tens of rupees, including treasure. The balance remained in this country as payment of debt. The people of India considered that this represented a tribute. It was not so in reality, for much of it was payment for value received, such as interest on the construction of the railways. Still there was a sufficient element of truth in it to cause real dissatisfaction in India. The natives of India likewise look with alarm on the increasing embarrassment of the finances of India, and dreaded the infliction of fresh taxation. The last three years had shown annual deficits amounting altogether to 3,000,000 of tens of rupees, owing to the heavy fall of exchange. This current year would, however, show a large further deficit, for exchange was already more than 1d. below the rate taken in the Financial Statement for 1894-5. The Secretary of State might not unlikely have a deficit of 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 of tens of rupees this coming year. He submitted to the House that if they wished to make the people of India loyal to the British Crown and Government, there was one effectual way, and that was to give them perpetual fixed rent. They would then be the most loyal population in the world. They would be induced to put all their powers into improving the soil, and particularly in sinking wells. They were now afraid that even if they put a new door or a new window to a house they would have to pay a few more rupees' rent. There was also a system of bribery and corruption by the under officials of the Government. He was repeatedly informed in India that it was always a case of so many rupees to be paid to an under officer, and unless it was paid there was a huge over-assessment, and, as a matter of fact, everyone had to pay in order to have his assessment made at a proper rate. If the Secretary for India could do anything to prevent this he would do a good deal to ensure the loyalty of the Indians. If he was not mistaken it was Lord Halifax, when Secretary for India, who proposed to consider settlement of land perpetual. He passed to another class of grievances which was felt throughout India—namely, the tendency of the Administration to stimulate the use of alcoholic drugs. Three years ago a very strong condemnation was passed by this House on the opium revenue. The Government of India felt themselves constrained to issue an order closing the opium smoking dens in India. But these dens which had been officially closed were unofficially opened. They were not opened by the Government, but by the same class of men who had owned them before, and who by changing their name were allowed practically unchallenged to open these unlicensed places for this abominable traffic. These opium clubs had been exposed by a band of earnest and determined men who resolved to bring to the light of day the abominations practised in connection with them. They visited these illicit clubs and exposed the scenes they witnessed in *The Bombay Guardian.* They condemned the opium department for permitting this infraction of the law, and they stigmatised by name the officer who, in their opinion, was bound to put the law in force. This officer prosecuted them for defamation of character, and won his case before a Lower Court in Bombay. Four of these missionaries were condemned to a fine or in default to a month's imprisonment. They refused to pay the fine, as most of it went to the inculpated official, and so they suffered a month's imprisonment. He did not say the sentence was technically wrong, but claimed that they were in reality right, and did a public service by exposing these illicit clubs. These incidents showed, he feared, that the Indian administration was out of touch with the best moral feeling of this country and India. It was indeed pushed on by an unfortunate need of the Revenue to adopt a policy it would otherwise avoid. A far more economical administration of India must be adopted if they were to avoid increasing unpopularity and scandal in the government of that country. He thought he had made out a case for inquiry. He admitted that the language of his Resolution was strong, but he would engage to modify it if the Government would concede the substance. He would omit the last words about the Government of India, which were too wide. He believed that, looking to the state of opinion in India, this Government could not do a wiser thing than promise inquiry. Public opinion there was sore at the rejection of the Resolution of this House last year in favour of simultaneous examinations. The adoption of this Resolution would soothe it and restore faith in the justice of this country. The Indian people had touching faith in the justice and impartiality of the British people; they believed if they could bring their grievances before this august tribunal they would be sure of redress. He begged the Secretary of State not to disappoint this expectation of countless millions of their fellow-subjects; they had no Parliament of their own; they made their mute appeal to this mother of Parliaments. He begged the House not to reject it.

*MR. NAOROJI (Finsbury, Central) said, he undertook now to second this Resolution, and before going into the subject of the different parts of which it consisted he would say a few preliminary words. The Government of India distinctly admitted and knew very well that the educated people of India were thoroughly loyal. The hon. Member for Kingston (Sir R. Temple) had stated that the state of the country and of the people often invited or demanded criticism on the part of the natives. It was in every way desirable that their sentiments and opinions should be made known to the ruling classes, and such outspoken frankness should never be mistaken for disloyalty or disaffection. Nothing was nearer to his (Mr. Naoroji's) mind than to make the fullest acknowledgment of all the good that had been done by the connection of the British people with India. They had no complaint against the British people and Parliament. They had from them everything they could desire. It was against the system adopted by the British Indian authorities in the last century and maintained up till now, though much modified, that they protested. The first point in the Motion was the condition of the people of India. In order to understand fully the present condition of the people of India, it was necessary to have a sort of sketch of the past, and he would give it as briefly as possible. In the last century the Administration was everything that should not be desired. He would give a few extracts from letters of the Court of Directors and the Bengal Government. In one of the letters the Directors said (8th of February, 1764)—

> "Your deliberations on the inland trade have laid open to us a scene of most cruel oppression; the poor of the country, who used always to deal in salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, are now deprived of their daily bread by the trade of the Europeans."

Lord Clive wrote (17th of April, 1765)—

> "The confusion we behold, what does it arise from?—rapacity and luxury, the unwarrantable desire of many to acquire in an instant what only a few can or ought to possess."

Another letter of Lord Clive to the Court of Directors said (30th of September, 1765)—

> "It is no wonder that the lust of riches should readily embrace the proffered means of its gratification, or that the instruments of your power should avail themselves of their authority and proceed even to extortion in those cases where simple corruption could not keep pace with their rapacity. Examples of this sort set by superiors could not fail of being followed in a proportionate degree by inferiors; the evil was contagious, and spread among the civil and military down to the writer, the ensign, and the free merchant."

He would read one more extract from a letter of the Court of Directors (17th of May, 1766)—

> "We must add that we think the vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that ever was known in any age or country."

Macaulay had summed up—

> "A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against demons. . . . The business of a servant of the Company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds as speedily as possible."

Such was the character of the Government and the Administration in the last century; when all this was disclosed by the Committee of 1772 of course a change was made, and a change for the better. He would now give the opinion of Anglo-Indian and English statesmen, and the House would observe that he did not say a single word as to what the Indians themselves said. He put his case before the House in the words of Anglo-Indian and English statesmen alone; some of them had expressed great indignation with usual British feeling against wrong-doing, others had expressed themselves much more moderately. Sir John Shore was the first person who gave a clear prophetic forecast of the character of this system and its effects as early as 1787. He then said (Ret. 377 of 1812)—

> "Whatever allowance we may make for the increased industry of the subjects of the State, owing to the enhanced demand for the produce of it (supposing the demand to be enhanced),

> there is reason to conclude that the benefits are more than counterbalanced by evils inseparable from the system of a remote foreign dominion."

The words were true to the present day. In 1790 Lord Cornwallis said, in a Minute, that the heavy drain of wealth by the Company, with the addition of remittances of private fortunes, was severely felt in the languor thrown upon the cultivation and commerce of the country. In 1823 Sir Thomas Munro pointed out that were Britain subjugated by a foreign Power, and the people excluded from the government of their country, all their knowledge and all their literature, sacred and profane, would not save them from becoming in a generation or two a low-minded, deceitful, and dishonest race. Ludlow, in his *British India*, said—

> "As respects the general condition of the country, let us first recollect what Sir Thomas Munro wrote years ago, 'that even if we could be secured against every internal commotion and could retain the country quietly in subjection, he doubted much if the condition of the people would be better than under the Native Princes'; that the inhabitants of the British Provinces were 'certainly the most abject race in India'; that the consequences of the conquest of India by the British arms, would be in place of raising to debase the whole people."

Macaulay, in introducing the clause of our equality with all British subjects, our first Charter of our emancipation in the Bill of 1833, said in his famous and statesmanlike speech—

> "That would, indeed, be a doting wisdom which, in order that India may remain a dependency . . . . which would keep a hundred millions of men from being our customers in order that they might continue to be our slaves."

And, to illustrate the character of the existing system, he said—

> "It was, as Bernier tells us, the practice of the miserable tyrants whom he found in India, when they dreaded the capacity and spirit of some distinguished subject, and yet could not venture to murder him, to administer to him a daily dose of the pousta, a preparation of opium, the effect of which was in a few months to destroy all the bodily and mental powers of the wretch who was drugged with it, and to turn him into a helpless idiot. This detestable artifice, more horrible than assassination itself, was worthy of those who employed it. It is no model for the English nation. We shall never consent to administer the pousta to a whole community—to stupefy and paralyse a great people whom God has committed to our charge—for the wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control."

In a speech (19th of February, 1844) he said—

> "Of all forms of tyranny I believe that the worst is that of a nation over a nation."

Lord Lansdowne, in introducing the same clause of the Bill of 1833 into the House of Lords, pointed out that he should be taking a very narrow view of this question, and one utterly inadequate to the great importance of the subject, which involved in it the happiness or misery of 100,000,000 of human beings, were he not to call the attention of their Lordships to the bearing which this question, and to the influence which this arrangement must exercise upon the future destinies of that vast mass of people. With such high sense of statesmanship and responsibility did Lord Lansdowne of 1833 break our chains. The Indian authorities, however, never allowed those broken chains to fall from our body, and the grandson—the Lord Lansdowne of 1893—now rivetted back those chains upon us. Look upon this picture and upon that! And the Indians were now just the same British slaves, instead of British subjects, as they were before their emancipation in 1833. Mr. Montgomery Martin, after examining the records of a survey of the condition of the people of some Provinces of Bengal or Behar, which had been made for nine years from 1807-1816, concluded—

> "It is impossible to avoid remarking two facts as peculiarly striking: First, the richness of the country surveyed; and, second, the poverty of its inhabitants."

He gave the reason for these striking facts. He said—

> "The annual drain of £3,000,000 on British India has amounted in 30 years at 12 per cent. (the usual Indian rate) compound interest to the enormous sum of £723,900,000 sterling. So constant and accumulating a drain, even in England, would soon impoverish her. How severe, then, must be its effects in India where the wage of a labourer is from 2d. to 3d. a day."

The drain at present was seven times, if not 10 times, as much. Mr. Frederick Shore, of the Bengal Civil Service, said, in 1837—

> "But the halcyon days of India are over. She has been drained of a large proportion of the wealth she once possessed, and her energies have been cramped by a sordid system of misrule to which the interests of millions have been sacrificed for the benefit of the few. The fundamental principle of the English had been to make the whole Indian nation subservient in every possible way to the interests and benefits of themselves."

And he summarised thus—

> "The summary was that the British Indian Government had been practically one of the most extortionate and oppressive that ever existed in India. Some acknowledged this,

and observed that it was the unavoidable result of a foreign yoke. That this was correct regarding a Government conducted on the principles which had hitherto actuated us was too lamentably true, but, had the welfare of the people been our object, a very different course would have been adopted, and very different results would have followed. For again and again I repeat that there was nothing in the circumstance itself of our being foreigners of different colour and faith that should occasion the people to hate us. We might thank ourselves for having made their feelings towards us what they were. Had we acted on a more liberal plan we should have fixed our authority on a much more solid foundation."

After giving some more similar authorities, Sir R. Temple and others, the hon. Gentleman proceeded: Mr. Bright, speaking in the House of Commons in 1858, said—

> "We must in future have India governed, not for a handful of Englishmen, not for that Civil Service whose praises are so constantly sounded in this House. You may govern India, if you like, for the good of England, but the good of England must come through the channels of the good of India. There are but two modes of gaining anything by our connection with India —the one is by plundering the people of India, and the other by trading with them. I prefer to do it by trading with them. But in order that England may become rich by trading with India, India itself must become rich."

Sir George Wingate, with his intimate acquaintance with the condition of the people of India, as the introducer of the Bombay land survey system, pointed out, with reference to the economic effects upon the condition of India, that taxes spent in the country from which they were raised were totally different in their effect from taxes raised in one country and spent in another. In the former case the taxes collected from the population were again returned to the industrial classes; but the case was wholly different when taxes were not spent in the country from which they were raised, as they constituted an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country; and he said, further, that such was the nature of the tribute the British had so long exacted from India—and that with this explanation some faint conception may be formed of the cruel, crushing effect of the tribute upon India—that this tribute, whether weighed in the scales of Justice or viewed in the light of the British interests, would be found to be at variance with humanity, with common sense, and with the received maxim of economical science. Mr. Fawcett quoted Lord Metcalf (5th May, 1868), that the bane of the British-Indian system was, that the advantages were reaped by one class and the work was done by another. This havoc was going on increasing up to the present day. Lord Salisbury, in a Minute [Ret. c. 3086-1 of 1881], pointed out that the injury was exaggerated in the case of India, where so much of the revenue was exported without a direct equivalent—that as India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood was congested or at least sufficient, not to the rural districts which were already feeble from the want of blood. This bleeding of India must cease. Lord Hartington (the Duke of Devonshire) declared (23rd Aug., 1883) that India was insufficiently governed, and that if it was to be better governed, that could only be done by the employment of the best and most intelligent of the natives in the Service; and he further advised that it was not wise to drive the people to think that their only hope lay in getting rid of their English rulers. Lastly, with regard to the present condition of India, and even serious danger to British power, a remarkable confirmation was given, after a hundred years, to Sir John Shore's prophesy of 1787, by the Secretary of State for India in 1886. A letter of the India Office to the Treasury said (Ret. c. 4868 of 1886)—

> "The position of India in relation to taxation and the sources of the public revenue is very peculiar, not merely from the habits of the people and their strong aversion to change, which is more specially exhibited to new forms of taxation, but likewise from the character of the Government, which is in the hands of foreigners, who hold the principal administrative offices and form so large a part of the Army. The impatience of the new taxation which will have to be borne wholly as a consequence of the foreign rule imposed on the country and virtually to meet additions to charges arising outside of the country, would constitute a political danger, the real magnitude of which, it is to be feared, is not at all appreciated by persons who have no knowledge of or concern in the government of India, but which those responsible for that government have long regarded as of the most serious order."

To sum up—as to the material condition of India—the main features in the last century were gross corruption and oppression by the Europeans; in the present century, high salaries and the heavy weight of the European services—their economic condition. Therefore, there was no such thing as the finances of

India. No financier ever could make a real healthy finance of India, unless he could make two and two equal to six. The most essential condition was wanting. Taxes must be administered by and disbursed to those who paid. That did not exist. From the taxes raised every year a large portion was eaten up and carried away from the country by others than the people of British India. The finances of that country were simply inexplicable, and could not be carried out; if the extracts he had read meant anything, they meant that the present evil system of a foreign domination was destroying them, and was fraught with political danger of the most serious order to British power itself. It had been clearly pointed out that India was extremely poor. What advantage had been derived by India during the past 100 years under the administration of the most highly-praised and most highly-paid officials in the world? If there was any condemnation of the existing system, it was in the result that the country was poorer than any country in the world. He could adduce a number of facts and figures of the practical effect of the present system of administration, but there was not the time now. The very fact of the wail of the Finance Ministers of this decade was a complete condemnation. He was quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India was truly desirous to know the truth, but he could not know that clearly unless certain information was placed before the House. He would suggest if the right hon. Gentleman allowed a certain number of Returns which would give the regular production of the country year by year, and the absolute necessaries of a common labourer to live in working health. In connection with the trade test there was one fallacy which he must explain. They were told in Statistical Returns that India had an enormous trade of nearly £196,000,000, imports and exports together. If he sent goods worth £100 out of this country to some other country, he expected there was £100 of it returned to him with some addition of profit. That was the natural condition of every trade. In the Colonies and in European countries there was an excess of imports over exports. In the United Kingdom for the past 10 years—1883 to 1892—the excess had been 32 per cent., in Norway it was 42 per cent., Sweden 24 per cent., Denmark 40 per cent., Holland 22 per cent., France 20 per cent., Switzerland 28 per cent., Spain 9 per cent., Belgium 7 per cent., and so on. Anyone with common sense would, of course, admit that if a quantity of goods worth a certain amount of money were sent out, an additional profit was expected in return; if not, there could not be any commerce; but a man who only received in return 90 of the 100 sent out would soon go into the Bankruptcy Court. Taking India's profits to be only 10 per cent. instead of 32 per cent., like those of the United Kingdom, and after making all deductions for remittances for interest on public works loans, India had received back Rs.170,000,000 worth of imports less than what she exported annually. On the average of 10 years (1883 to 1892) their excesses of exports every year, with compound interest, would amount to enormous sums lost by her. Could any country in the world, England not excepted, stand such a drain without destruction? They were often told they ought to be thankful, and they were thankful, for the loans made to them for public works; but if they were left to themselves to enjoy what they produced with a reasonable price for British rule, if they had to develop their own resources, they would not require any such loans with the interest to be paid on them, which added to the drain on the country. Those loans were only a fraction of what was taken away from the country. India had lost thousands of millions in principal and interest, and was asked to be thankful for the loan of a couple of hundreds of millions. The bulk of the British Indian subjects were like hewers of wood and drawers of water to the British and foreign Indian capitalists. The seeming prosperity of British India was entirely owing to the amount of foreign capital. In Bombay alone, which was considered to be a rich place, there were at least £10,000,000 of capital circulating belonging to foreign Europeans and Indians from native States. If all such foreign capital were separated there would be very little wealth in British India. He could not go further into these figures, because he must have an occasion on which he could go more fully into them. If only the right hon. Gentleman the

Secretary of State for India would give them the Returns which were necessary to understand more correctly and completely the real condition of India, they would all be the better for it. There was another thing that was very serious. The whole misfortune at the bottom, which made the people of British India the poorest in the world, was the pressure to be forced to pay, roughly speaking, 200,000,000 rupees annually for European foreign services. Till this evil of foreign domination, foretold by Sir John Shore, was reduced to reasonable dimensions, there was no hope, and no true and healthy finance for India. This canker was destructive to India and suicidal to the British. The British people would not stand a single day the evil if the Front Benches here—all the principal military and civil posts and a large portion of the Army—were to be occupied by some foreigners on even the plea of giving service. When an English official had acquired experience in the Service of 20 or 30 years, all that was entirely lost to India when he left the country, and it was a most serious loss, although he did not blame him for leaving the shore. They were left at a certain low level. They could not rise; they could not develop their capacity for higher government, because they had no opportunity; the result was, of course, that their faculties must be stunted. Lastly, every European displaced an Indian who should fill that post. In short, the evil of the foreign rule involved the triple loss of wealth, wisdom, and work. No wonder at India's material and moral poverty! The next point was the wants of the Indians. He did not think it would require very long discussion to ascertain their wants. They could be summed up in a few words. They wanted British honour, good faith, righteousness, and justice. They should then get everything that was good for themselves, and it would benefit the rulers themselves, but unfortunately that had not been their fortune. Here they had an admission of the manner in which their best interests were treated. Lord Lytton, in a confidential Minute, said—

> "No sooner was the Act passed than the Government began to devise means for practically evading the fulfilment of it. . . . . . We all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We have had to choose between prohibiting them and cheating them, and we have chosen the least straightforward course."

He would not believe that the Sovereign and the Parliament who gave these pledges of justice and honour intended to cheat. It was the Indian Executive who had abused their trust. That Act of 1833 was a dead letter up to the present day. Lord Lytton said—

> "Since I am writing confidentially, I do not hesitate to say that both the Governments of England and of India appear to me up to the present moment unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear."

What they wanted was, that what Lord Salisbury called "bleeding" should have an end. That would restore them to prosperity, and England might derive ten times more benefit by trading with a prosperous people than she was doing now. They were destroying the bird that could give them ten golden eggs with a blessing upon them. The hon. Member for Kingston, in his *India in 1880*, said—

> "Many native statesmen have been produced of whom the Indian nation may justly be proud, and among whom may be mentioned Salar Jung of Hyderabad, Dunkar Rao of Gwalior, Madhar Rao of Baroda, Kirparam of Jammu, Pundit Manphal of Alwar, Faiz Ali Khan of Kotah, Madha Rao Barvi of Kolahpur, and Purnia of Mysore."

Mountstuart Elphinstone said, before the Committee of 1833—

> "The first object, therefore, is to break down the separation between the classes and raise the natives by education and public trust to a level with their present rulers."

He addressed the Conservative Party. It was this Party who had given the just Proclamation of 1858—their greater Charter—in these words—

> "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects, and those obligations, by the blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil."

It was, again, the Conservative Party that, on the assumption of the Imperial title by our Sovereign, proclaimed again the equality of the natives, whatever their race or creed, with their English fellow-subjects, and that their claim was founded in the highest justice. At the Jubilee, under the Conservative Government again, the Empress of India gave to her Indian subjects the gracious assurance and pledge that—

"It had always been and always will be Her earnest desire to maintain unswervingly the principles laid down in the Proclamation published on Her assumption of the direct control of the Government of India."

He (Mr. Naoroji) earnestly appealed to this Party not to give the lie to these noble assurances, and not to show to the world that it was all hypocrisy and national bad faith. The Indians would still continue to put their faith in the English people, and ask again and again to have justice done. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India, and to the Government and the Liberal Party, who gave them their first emancipation. They felt deeply grateful for the promises made, but would ask that these words be now converted into loyal, faithful deeds, as Englishmen for their honour are bound to do. Some weeks ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian wrote a letter to Sir John Cowan in which he stated that the past 60 years had been years of emancipation. Many emancipations had taken place in these years; the Irish, the Jews, the slaves, all received emancipation in that wave of humanity which passed over this country, and which made this country the most brilliant and civilised of the countries of the world. In those days of emancipation, and in the very year in which the right hon. Gentleman began his political career, the people of India also had their emancipation at the hands of the Liberal Party. It was the Liberal Party that passed the Act of 1833 and made the magnificent promises, explained both by Macaulay and Lansdowne. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian to say whether, after the Liberal Party having given this emancipation at the commencement of his political career, he would at the end of it, while giving emancipation to 3,000,000 of Irishmen, only further enslave the 300,000,000 of India? The decision relating to the simultaneous examinations meant rivetting back upon them every chain broken by the act of emancipation. The right hon. Gentleman in 1893, in connection with the Irish question, after alluding to the arguments of fear and force, said—

"I hope we shall never again have occasion to fall back upon that miserable argument. It is better to do justice for terror than not to do it at all; but we are in a condition neither of terror nor apprehension, but in a calm and thankful state. We ask the House to accept this Bill, and I make that appeal on the grounds of honour and of duty."

Might he, then, appeal in these days when every educated man in India was thoroughly loyal, when there was loyalty in every class of the people of India, and ask was it not time for England to do justice to India on the same grounds of "honour and duty?" The right hon. Member also said—

"There can be no more melancholy, and in the last result no more degrading, spectacle upon earth than the spectacle of oppression, or of wrong in whatever form, inflicted by the deliberate act of a nation upon another nation, especially by the deliberate act of such a country as Great Britain upon such a country as Ireland."

This applied to India with a force ten times greater. And he appealed for the nobler spectacle of which the right hon. Gentleman subsequently spoke. He said—

"But, on the other hand, there can be no nobler spectacle than that which we think is now dawning upon us, the spectacle of a nation deliberately set on the removal of injustice, deliberately determined to break—not through terror, not in haste, but under the sole influence of duty and honour—determined to break with whatever remains still existing of an evil tradition, and determined in that way at once to pay a debt of justice, and to consult by a bold, wise, and good act, its own interests and its own honour."

These noble words applied with tenfold necessity to Britain's duty to India. It would be in the interest of England to remove the injustice under which India suffered more than it would be in the interest even of India itself. He would repeat the prayer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian, that he would not allow his glorious career to end with the enthralment of 300,000,000 of the human race whose destinies are entrusted to this great country, and from which they expect nothing but justice and righteousness. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India the other day made a memorable speech at Wolverhampton. Among other things, he uttered these noble words—

"New and pressing problems were coming up with which the Liberal Party would have to deal. These problems were the moral and material conditions of the people, for both went very much together. They were the problems that the statesmen of the future would have to solve. Mr. Bright once said that the true glory of a nation was not in ships and colonies and commerce, but in the happiness of its homes, and that no Government and no Party deserved the confidence of the British electorate which did not give a foremost place in its legislation and administration to those measures which would promote the comfort, health, prosperity, well-being, and the well-doing of the masses of the people."

He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India that in that spirit he should study the Indian problem. Here in England they had to deal with only 38,000,000 of people, and if the right hon. Gentleman would once understand the Indian problem and do them the justice for which they had been waiting for 60 years, he would be one of the greatest benefactors of the human race. He appealed also to the present Prime Minister with confidence, because he had had an opportunity of knowing that the Prime Minister thoroughly understood the Indian problem. Few Englishmen so clearly understood that problem or the effect of the drain on the resources of India. He saw clearly also how far India was to be made a blessing to itself and to England. Would he begin his promising career as Prime Minister by enslaving 300,000,000 of British subjects? He appealed to him to consider. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India that the feeling in India among the educated classes was nearing despair. It was a very bad seed that was being sown in connection with this matter if some scheme was not adopted, with reasonable modifications, to give some effect to the Resolution for simultaneous examinations, as was promised a few months ago. The Under Secretary for India assured them in the last Indian Budget Debate that neither he nor the Secretary of State for India had any disposition of thwarting or defeating that Resolution. Indians then felt assured on the point, and their joy was great. But what must be their despair and disappointment when such statements are put before the House of Commons and the country as were to be found in this dark Blue Book. It was enough to break anybody's heart. It would have broken his but for the strong faith he had in the justice of the British people and the one bright ray to be found even in that Return itself, which had strengthened him to continue his appeal as long as he should live. That ray has come from the Madras Government. They had pointed out that they felt bound to do something. They also pointed out the difficulties in the way, but these difficulties were not insurmountable. About the want of true living representation of the people he would not now say anything. Every Englishman understood its importance. The next point in the Motion was the ability to bear existing burdens. Indians were often told by men in authority that India was the lightest-taxed country in the world. The United Kingdom paid £2 10s. per head for the purposes of the State. They paid only 5s. or 6s. per head, and, therefore, the conclusion was drawn that the Indians were the most lightly-taxed people on earth. But if these gentlemen would only take the trouble of looking a little deeper they would see how the matter stood. England paid £2 10s. per head from an income of something like £35 per head, and their capacity, therefore, to pay £2 10s. was sufficiently large. Then, again, this £2 10s. returned to them—every farthing of it—in some form or another. The proportion they paid to the State in the shape of Revenues was, therefore, something like only 7 or 8 per cent. India paid 5s. or 6s. out of their wretched incomes of £2, or 20 rupees, as he calculated, or 27 rupees, as calculated by Lord Cromer. But even taking the latter figure, it would not make any great difference. The three rupees was far more burdensome compared with the wretched capacity of the people of India to bear taxation than the £2 10s. which England paid. At the rate of production of Rs.20 per head India paid 14 per cent. of her income for purposes of revenue — nearly twice as heavy as the incidence of the United Kingdom. Even at the rate of production of Rs.27 per head the Indian burden was 11 per cent. Then, again, take the test of the Income Tax. In the United Kingdom 1d. in the Income Tax gave some £2,500,000; but in India, with ten times the population, 1d. only gave about Rx.300,000, with an exemption of only Rx.50 instead of £150 as in this country. In the last 100 years the wealth of England had increased by leaps and bounds, while India, governed by the same Englishmen, was the same poor nation that it was all through the century that had elapsed, and India at the present moment was the most extremely poor country in the world, and would be poor to the end of the chapter if the present system of foreign domination continued. He did not say that the natives should attain to the highest positions of control and power. Let there be Europeans in the highest positions, such as the Viceroy, the Governors, the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, and the higher military officers, and such others as might be reasonably considered to be required to hold the controlling powers. The controlling power of Englishmen in India was wanted as much for the benefit of India as for the benefit of England. The next point in the Motion was, what were the sources of Indian Revenue? The chief sources of the Revenue were just what was mainly obtained from the cultivators of the soil. Here in this country the landlords—the wealthiest people—paid from land only 2 or 3 per cent. of the Revenues, but in India land was made to contribute something like Rx.27,000,000 of the total Revenue of about Rx.67,000,000. Then the Salt Tax, the most cruel Revenue imposed in any civilised country, provided Rx.8,600,000, and that with the opium, formed the bulk of the Revenue of India, which was drawn from the wretchedness of the people and by poisoning the Chinese. It mattered not what the State received was called—tax, rent, revenue, or by any other name they liked—the simple fact of the matter was, that out of a certain annual national production the State took a certain portion. Now, it would not also matter much about the portion taken by the State if that portion, as in this country, returned to the people themselves, from whom it was raised. But the misfortune and the evil was that much of this portion did not return to the people, and that the whole system of Revenue, and the economic condition of the people became unnatural and oppressive, with danger to the rulers. In this country the people drank nearly £4 per head, while in India they could not produce altogether more than half that amount per head. Was the system under which such a wretched condition prevailed not a matter for careful consideration? So long as the system went on, so long must the people go on living wretched lives. There was a constant draining away of India's resources, and she could never, therefore, be a prosperous country. Not only that, but in time India must perish, and with it might perish the British Empire. If India was prosperous, England would be prosperous ten times more than she was at present by reason of the trade she could carry on with India. England at present exported some £300,000,000 worth of British produce, yet to India she hardly exported produce to the value of 2s. 6d. per head. If India were prosperous enough to buy even £1 worth per head of English goods she would be able to send to India as much as she now sent to the whole world. Would it not, then, be a far greater benefit to England if India were prosperous than to keep her as she was? The next point in the Motion was the reduction of expenditure. The very first thing should be to cancel that immoral and and cruel "compensation" without any legal claim even. That was not the occasion to discuss its selfishness and utter disregard of the wretchedness of the millions of the people. But as if this injustice were not enough, other bad features were added to it, if my information be correct. The compensation was only for remittances to this country. But instead of this — every European and Eurasian, whether he had to make any family remittances or not, was to have a certain addition to his salary. That was not all. The iniquity of making race distinctions was again adopted in this also; Europeans and Eurasians, whether remittances had to be made or not, were to receive compensation; but an Indian, who had actually to make remittances for the education of his sons, could have no consideration. But he (Mr. Naoroji) deprecated the whole thing altogether—to take from the wretched to give to the better-off. This compensation should be cancelled as the first step in reduction. As the Chancellor of the Exchequer said the other day in his splendid speech at his magnificent ovation by the Liberal Members, in speaking of the landowners, the burden was always shifted on to other shoulders, and always on those least able to pay. This was exactly the principle of Anglo-Indian authorities. If it was really intended to retrench with regard to expenditure in India, why not begin with the salary list? The Viceroy surely could get his bread and butter with £20,000 a year instead of £25,000. The Governors could surely have bread and cheese for £6,000 or £8,000 instead of £10,000, and so on down till the end of the salary list was reached at Rs.200 a month. This would afford a much-needed relief, because India could not really afford to pay. Sir William Hunter had rightly said that if we were to govern the Indian people efficiently and cheaply we must govern them by means of themselves, and pay for the administration at the market rates of native labour; that the good work of security and law had assumed such dimensions under the Queen's government of India that it could no longer be carried on or even supervised by imported labour from England, except at a cost which India could sustain, and he had prophesied that 40 years hereafter they would have had an Indian Ireland multiplied fifty-fold on their hands. The Service must change from that which was dear, and at the same time unsatisfactory, to one which would require less money and which would at the same time be fruitful to the people themselves. Next, three Secretaries of State and two Viceroys the other day in the House of Lords condemned in the strongest terms the charge that was made by the War Office for troops in India. But it seemed that one Secretary for India (Lord Kimberley) trembled to approach the War Minister, because each new discussion resulted in additional charges and additional burdens. He also truly said that the Authorities here, not having to pay from their own pockets, readily made proposals of charges which were unjust and unnecessary, to make things agreeable. The consequence was that charges were imposed which were unjust and cruel. In fact, whatever could have the name of India attached to it, India was forced to pay for it. That was not the justice which he expected from the English. With reference to these military charges, the burden now thrown upon India on account of British troops was excessive, and he thought every impartial judgment would assent to that proposition, considering the relative material wealth of the two countries and their joint obligations and benefits. All that they could do was to appeal to the British Government for an impartial consideration of the relative financial capacity of the two countries, and for a generous consideration to be shown by the wealthiest nation in the world to a dependency so comparatively poor and so little advanced as India. He believed that if any Committee were appointed to inquire, with the honest purpose of finding out how to make India prosperous and at the same time to confer as much if not more benefit to England, they could very easily find out the way, and would be able to suggest what should be done. Now, with regard to the financial relations between India and England, it was declared over and over again that this European Army and all European servants were for the special purpose of maintaining the power of the British Empire. Were they, therefore, not for some benefit to England? Were they only for the service of India, for their benefit and for their protection? Was it right that they did avowedly use machinery more for their own purposes than for the purposes of India, and yet make India pay altogether? Was it right, if India's prosperity was, as Lord Roberts said, so indissolubly bound up with their own, and if the greatness and prosperity of the United Kingdom depended upon the retention of India, that they should pay nothing for it, and that they should extract from it every farthing they possibly could? They appealed to their sense of justice in this matter. They were not asking for this as any favour or concession. They based their appeal on the ground of simple justice. Here was a machinery by which both England and India benefited, and it was only common justice that both should share the cost of it. If this expenditure on the European Army and the; European Civil Services, which was really the cause of their misery, was for the benefit of both, it was only right that they, as honourable men, should take a share. Their prayer was for an impartial and comprehensive inquiry so that the whole matter might be gone into, and that the question of principles and policy which, after all, was one for their statesmen to decide, should be properly dealt with. They knew that during the rule of the East India Company an inquiry was made every 20 years into the affairs of India. This was no reflection upon the Government; it was simply to see that the East India Company did their duty. There was such an inquiry in 1853, and he thought it was time, after 40 years had elapsed since the assumption of British rule by the Queen, that there should be some regular, independent inquiry like that which used to take place in former days, so that the people and Parliament of this country might see that the Indian Authorities were doing their duty. The result of the irresponsibility of the present British Administration was that the expenditure went on unchecked. He admitted fully that expenditure must go on increasing if India was to progress in her civilisation; but if they allowed her to prosper, India would be able not only to pay her £60,000,000 out of the 300,000,000 of population, but she would be able to pay twice, three times, and four times as much. It was not that they did not want to expend as much as was necessary. Their simple complaint was that the present system did not allow India to become prosperous, and so enable her to supply the necessary revenue. As to the character of the inquiry, it should be full and impartial. The right hon. Member for Midlothian said on one occasion not long ago, when the question of the Opium Trade was under discussion in that House—

> "I must make the admission that I do not think that in this matter we ought to be guided exclusively, perhaps even principally, by those who may consider themselves experts. It is a very sad thing to say, but unquestionably it happens not infrequently in human affairs that those who might, from their position, know the most and the best, yet, from their prejudices and prepossessions, know the least and the worst. I certainly for my part do not propose to abide finally and decisively by official opinion."

And the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that what the House wanted, in his opinion, was "independent but responsible opinion," in order to enable it to proceed safely to a decision on the subject which was to be considered. He was asking by this Resolution nothing more than what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Midlothian had said was actually necessary for the Opium Commission. How much more necessary it was when they meant to overhaul and examine all the various departments of administration, and the affairs of 300,000,000 of people, all in a state of transition in civilisation—complicated especially by this evil of foreign rule! What was wanted was an independent inquiry by which the rulers and the ruled might come to some fair and honourable understanding with each other which would keep them together in good faith and good heart. He could only repeat the appeal he had made, in the words of the Queen herself, when Her Majesty in Her great Indian Proclamation said—

> "In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward!"

and then She prayed—

> "and may the God of all power grant to us and to those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people!"

He said Amen to that. He appealed once more to the House and to the British people to look into the whole problem of Indian relations with England. There was no reason whatever why there should not be a thorough good understanding between the two countries, a thorough goodwill on the part of Britain, and a thorough loyalty on the part of India, with blessings to both, if the principles and policy laid down from time to time by the British people and by the British Parliament were loyally, faithfully, and worthily, as the English character ought to lead them to expect, observed by the Government of that country.

Amendment proposed, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

> "In the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens; the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India."—(*Mr. S. Smith.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir A. SCOBLE (Hackney, N.) did not know how far, if at all, the Government proposed to meet this Resolution by accepting it, but could only say that the inquiry upon which the House was asked to enter would be very tedious and very expensive, and that although it might add something to the knowledge of those gentlemen who were not familiar with Indian affairs, it would really only give information which could already be obtained from other sources by any person who chose to take the trouble to look into them. Not one of those who listened to the hon.Member for East Finsbury but must have felt that he put forward his case with a strong conviction that it was a good one, and that he was supporting it by honest argument. He could only lament that the absence of the hon. Member from India during so many years had so far broken his recollection of the state of things that obtained during the time he was in residence that the hon. Member had had to go back to the last century for proofs of Indian maladministration instead of directing his attention to what had been done in India since the government of that country was assumed by Great Britain. They had not now to do with the days of Nabobs, with the state of things exposed by Mr. Sheridan, with what followed after the trial of Warren Hastings, and with what occurred in the earlier parts of this century. This inquiry was asked for to ascertain how India was governed under the Queen, how far that government corresponded with the requirements and condition of that country, and in what respect, if any, that government could be improved. That was an inquiry which had occupied the attention of successive Governments of India ever since Her Majesty assumed the government. It was a great mistake to suppose that the Government of India was not as fully alive as the hon. Member for East Finsbury, or as the National Congress, whose voice he expressed in that House, to the condition of India, to the points that required amendment, and the points on which amendments could be carried out. No one who knew India would deny that, as compared with the United Kingdom, it was a poor country, but, as he said last year, poverty was a relative term. A man who would be poor in England upon an Indian income would upon that same income be very well off indeed in India. It was idle for the hon. Gentlemen to quote Lord Cromer, and to give as the result of his own inquiries the statement that the average income in India was only 27 rupees a year. No data existed by which a calculation of the average income could be made in an accurate form. Some might suppose that the conditions of life in India were the same as those of this country, where most of the people were employed for wages, and where they had to buy all the necessaries of life in shops and to pay rent for their houses. These expenses required a certain cash income to meet them. But they were not the expenses which were incurred by the Indian people at large. More than 70 per cent. of the whole population of India—of the 220,000,000 under the Queen's direct government—lived upon the land which had descended to them from their ancestors and which they cultivated. They paid no rent for their houses—these had been constructed by their own industry. They had nothing whatever to buy. Their sustenance they derived from the fields they cultivated, their luxuries from the gardens they kept; and their only financial transactions were made when they sold their surplus crops to pay the demands of the Government for the rent of the land they occupied, and when they purchased any additional luxuries for their own delectation. It was impossible that the income of people whose sustenance was derived in this way could be put into reliable statistics; and the estimate by statisticians of an average income of 27 rupees per head among the natives only came to this: that as far as money transactions were concerned that might be a fair representation of their income, but as far as the necessaries of life and those conditions which made all the difference between poverty and wealth were concerned, these depended upon matters not measured by money, and into whose calculation in India money did not enter at all. He considered that the monetary demands made upon the poor, who were the bulk of the population, were of a very small character indeed. First of all, the rent which the collector paid for his land was not a tax and could not possibly be turned into one. It was very small, amounting to little more than a rupee per man. Measured in money it was only about 1-25th part of the 27 rupees of which the House had heard that night; but when measured by produce it was less than 8 per cent. of the total outcome of the land. Even in the North-West Provinces, where the Land Revenue was higher than in other parts of India, it only amounted to 8 per cent. of the total produce of the land. The bulk of the population of India paid no tax at all, except a proportion of the Salt Tax, and that was about 5d. per head. Even taking the comparison between the United Kingdom and India they would find that instead of the contribution of the Indian individual being very much greater than that of the English peasant, the Indian peasant paid less even in proportion to the 27 rupees than the Englishman did on the average income of £35 or £36 a year. If that were true, as regards the great bulk of the population, how did the taxation of India affect the other classes of the community? No doubt there was very great difficulty in obtaining any tax such as might be expected in this country with its great wealthy cities, well able to bear an Income Tax; but in India, as in other parts of the world, wealthy men were astute enough to successfully avoid to a large extent the Income Tax.

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL. (No. 156.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

On Motion of Mr. DODD, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 1, line 27, Sub-section (4), after "court shall," insert "before or at the hearing of the complaint."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, he had prepared an Amendment which he believed would effect exactly the same object as the hon Member for Northampton (Mr. Channing) had in view, with the Amendment of which he had given notice, but in other words.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 1, after the word "force," to insert the words—

> or if that rate or charge is higher than the rate or charge in force on the last day of December one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, then such sum as would have been payable on the footing of the last-mentioned rate or charge."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH (Bristol, W.) thought this carried out the desire of the Committee and the intention of the hon. Member for Northampton, and it appeared to do so in the proper and in a more grammatical manner.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said, he had often found when there was agreement between the Leaders on the two Front Benches there was reason to look on a proposal with suspicion; therefore, that more consideration might be given to the matter he would move the adjournment of the Debate.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby) hoped his hon. Friend would not arrest the progress of the Bill at a point where there was general agreement.

It being after Midnight, and Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS [*changed from* "CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)"] BILL.—(No. 348.)

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I desire to move that the Bill be re-committed in respect to Clauses 24 and 25, and I am not without hope that Her Majesty's Government may be inclined to accept the Amendment I would suggest in Committee. The Amendment has stood on the Paper for some days, and but for my being accidentally prevented from being in my place last night I would have moved the Amendment when the Bill was in Committee. My object is to effect a change in the law, a proceeding which is perhaps not usual in Consolidation Bills, but the matter is of so much importance, and there is so little prospect of being able to do it in any other manner this Session, I beg leave to submit my Amendment

My object is to effect such a change in the law as will in future make it obligatory upon the Board of Agriculture, instead of leaving it a matter for discretion, to order the slaughter at the port of debarcation of all animals coming from foreign countries. That is the practice at this moment. All animals coming into the country are bound to be slaughtered on landing, but there is a discretion vested in the Board of Agriculture to admit animals without slaughter should the Board think fit. I press this now, because during the past three years there have been instances of cattle inspected with disease being landed in this country and in Scotland. These cattle came from Canada, and there the Board of Agriculture very properly exercised their power and insisted on the slaughter of all cattle at the port of arrival. But at the same time great pressure has been exercised from various influential quarters to get this restriction withdrawn, and I think it right that the law should be altered so that responsibility should be borne by Parliament, and not by any Department of the Government. The pressure brought to bear upon the Board of Agriculture was so great that even the President, who ordered a special inquiry and examination of carcases of animals went so far as to say that if, as the result of the examination, traces of disease were not found, he should feel it his duty to make a concession to the demands made upon him.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon; he is entirely mistaken.

MR. CHAPLIN: I have not the statement with me now, but I will undertake to say that in those or somewhat similar terms he held out hopes to those who were pressing him that if disease was not found in the course of the examination he would think it right to reconsider his decision.

MR. H. GARDNER: If there is no disease we are bound by the law.

MR. CHAPLIN: Not at all. That would be assuming that a country was free from disease; but let me point out that if in an examination of that kind no disease was found, that would not be the slightest guarantee that the country was free from disease, and for this reason: Animals sent to this country at the time when those persons interested in the trade abroad were very apprehensive of an Order being issued here were subjected to the most rigid examination before they were shipped, although the examination gave no guarantee of the soundness of the animal, and the greatest possible care was taken so that any animal to which the slightest suspicion of disease could attach was rejected and not allowed to come to this country. All the animals that came were carefully selected, and there was every chance that they would be free from disease. Under the circumstances, I contend that the special examination was no kind of security to us whatever; but unless I very grossly misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman, he did distinctly, in response to the pressure put upon him, hold out hopes that if the examination showed no trace of disease, then under the circumstances he would think it right to reconsider his decision. That was a great danger which the country happily escaped, but it is a danger which ought not to recur, and it is a danger to which we are continually subjected. Great pressure from influential quarters, as I have said, is brought to bear upon the right hon. Gentleman to induce him to relax the restriction. First, there is pressure from the Canadian Government; secondly, from the Colonial Office here; thirdly, from the people interested in ranches and the cattle trade of Canada; and, fourthly, from a limited section of Scotch feeders of cattle in two or three Scotch counties, and a still more limited number of feeders in England. There is always the apprehension that this pressure may be successful, and my desire is to remove that danger in the future. It will not alter the present practice one iota, and whenever a country becomes free from disease, then the Act may be repealed in this particular. But meantime the responsibility should be with Parliament; it should not rest with a Government Department. For this reason I take the somewhat unusual course—but the only one open to me, owing to the Government arrangement of business—of moving the re-committal of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words, "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of Clauses 24 and 25."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Sir W. HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman has said very truly that he has taken a most unusual course, and indeed I may say it is an unparalleled course on a Bill of this kind. It is the first time within my experience that such a proposal has been made. This is a Consolidation Bill, and the very object and essence of such a Bill is to consolidate Acts and not alter the law. Of course, we shall resist the Motion, and the only consequence of the right hon. Gentleman's action, if he perseveres in it, will be that this Bill, which is introduced in the interest of the agricultural community to show it will be a great advantage to have a consolidation of complicated Statutes, must be withdrawn. If the Motion is persisted in we must move the discharge of the Order, and the reponsibility will be with the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I am quite aware of that.

Mr. H. GARDNER: I beg to move that the Order be discharged.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) hoped the Government would not relinquish the endeavour to get the Bill through. This codification of Acts was undoubtedly most useful work, and much time and care had been bestowed upon this Bill. Who would be disposed to devote hours of labour to putting the law on a given subject into shape if in a moment of pique the result was to be thrown aside? Certainly this was likely to deter anyone from undertaking this work of Statute Law revision.

Mr. WARNER (Somerset, N.) hoped the Government would not persist in withdrawing the Bill. Let such a Motion be deferred for a few hours, and perhaps by the morrow the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Chaplin) would have reconsidered the case, and would not be disposed to follow a policy of "cutting off his nose to spite his face." Of course, it would be admitted that for farmers it was a very serious thing to allow the importation of live cattle from a country where disease exists.

Mr. H. GARDNER: The Government are willing to accept that advice, and to give the right hon. Gentleman a *locus penitentiæ.* We will defer the consideration of the Bill to Thursday.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I do not know what the right hon. Gentleman means by offering me a *locus penitentiæ.* I have made a statement in regard to a subject the importance of which will be generally recognised in connection with agricultural interests, and no answer has been made.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! Objection being taken stops further proceedings, and the Bill stands over.

It being after Midnight, and Objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL [*Lords*].
(No. 354.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) asked if this Bill had received the usual revision by the constituted authorities? On former occasions opportunity had been given to examine such Bills, and to make suggestions which were sometimes useful. He did not in any way wish to delay the Bill; but he asked, had the usual practice been followed? and hoped that some little time would be allowed to elapse between the circulation of such a Bill and its Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. Rigby, Forfar) said, the Bill had received the usual consideration of the Joint Committee, and had been reconsidered since printing. He had an Amendment to propose, but subject to that he could say that no blot would be found in the Bill. The Second Reading was taken last night.

Sir F. S. POWELL said, he got his copy this morning. Would the Government give an undertaking that, in future, a sufficient interval should be allowed?

Dr. CLARK thought that if an Amendment was to be made on the Bill, which only came into the hands of Members this morning, it should not now be proceeded with.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir J. Rigby.*)

Motion agreed to.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Thursday.

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL. (No. 349.)

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses agreed to.
Schedule.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, in the Act of last year the different Acts were numbered, but this year he observed the numbers were omitted. It was convenient to have the numbers inserted.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) regretted that the numbers were not put in; he feared it was too late now to insert them.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported, without Amendment; read the third time, and passed.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 340.)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [2nd August], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*SIR F. S. POWELL asked, what was the reason for the introduction of this Bill? The first clause seemed to imply that employers had acted with harshness and unfairness in regard to this matter towards their workmen; but, although he represented a mining district, he had never heard any complaint of that kind. At first sight the idea would arise that the Bill was intended to provide a remedy for the unjust action of employers.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) was sorry the hon. Member was not present when he moved the Second Reading, for he then explained the reasons that led to the introduction of the Bill. He was glad to say that no case, so far as he was aware, in England had made the Bill necessary; but there had been cases in Scotland—cases before the Courts—from which it appeared that the employer, not having any power to dismiss the check weigher without resorting to the Courts and giving legal ground for it, had taken an indirect means by dismissing the whole of the workmen, refusing to re-admit them unless they agreed not to employ the check weigher, and this had been held to be not a violation of the existing Act. It was to provide for such cases of extreme gravity, such as had never been heard of on this side of the border, that the Bill had been introduced.

MR. TOMLINSON asked if the right hon. Gentleman intended to omit Clause 2?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

QUARRIES BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 341.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) formally moved to omit from the Schedule the words "Section nine," for the purpose of asking a question. The Schedule applied to quarries henceforth to be subject to the Metalliferous Mines Act the section of the old Mines Act which prohibited the payment of wages in public-houses. But by the general Act of 1883 this was made illegal anywhere. Was it worth while, therefore, to include this section in the Schedule?

MR. ASQUITH said, he was quite aware of the fact that by general Act the practice was prohibited, but it had been thought more convenient to include the section in the application of the Mines Act to quarries, and though it was not necessary it could do no harm. The hon. Gentleman on a previous occasion inquired as to whether the reference to the Schedules by number meant inclusive. That was so, and it was provided for in the Interpretation Clause.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) BILL.

MOTION FOR LEAVE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883."—(*Sir J. T. Hibbert.*)

DR. CLARK objected to the Bill being brought in at that hour; it should be deferred to the commencement of the Sitting on Thursday.

MR. KNOX (Cavan, W.) begged the hon. Member not to persist in his objection. It was a Bill introduced at the desire of Irish Members generally, not only of the Nationalist Party. Whoever the hon. Member had a grievance against it was clearly not against the Irish Members, and he should think twice and thrice before taking objection to the introduction without alleging a reason.

Objection withdrawn.

Motion agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Sir J. T. Hibbert, The Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. J. Morley.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 359.]

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 9) (CANALS OF CALEDONIAN AND NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 265.)

Lords Amendments agreed to.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 11) (GRAND CANAL, &c.) BILL.—(No. 267.)

Lords Amendments agreed to.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgwater, &c., Canals) Bill.

Town Improvements (Betterment),—That they communicate Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Town Improvements (Betterment), with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence, as desired by this House.

Marking of Foreign and Colonial Produce,—That they communicate Copy of the Report from the Select Committee appointed by their Lordships on Marking of Foreign and Colonial Produce, with the Proceedings of the Committee, and Minutes of Evidence, as desired by this House.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 353.)

Considered in Committee, and reported; Bill re-committed, in respect of Clauses 1 and 3; considered in Committee, and reported; as amended to be considered To-morrow.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 342.)

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

JURIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 350.)

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

On Motion of Sir Charles Dilke, Bill to establish a single Franchise at all Elections, and to remove the Disabilities of Women, ordered to be brought in by Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Jacob Bright, Mr. John Burns, Mr. Keir-Hardie, Mr. William Allen, Dr. Clark, and Mr. Byles.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 357.]

CROFTERS ACTS (INCLUSION OF LEASEHOLDERS) BILL.

On Motion of Dr. Clark, Bill to include Leaseholders under the provisions of the Crofters Acts, ordered to be brought in by Dr. Clark, Mr. Weir, and Dr. Macgregor.

Bill presented, and read first time. [Bill 358.]

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) [REMUNERATION].

Resolution reported; "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of remuneration to any persons appointed or employed under the provisions of any Act of the present Session to make further provision with respect to the Congested Districts Board for Ireland."

Resolution agreed to.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS, 1878 to 1893.

Copy presented,—of further Papers and Correspondence relating to the landing in Great Britain from Canada of Cattle affected with Pleuro-Pneumonia, with Copy of a Minute of the Board of Agriculture dated 13th August 1894, and Minutes of Evidence and Appendices (in continuation of [C. 7123] and [C. 7366]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

House adjourned at half after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 15th August 1894.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

RESOLUTION.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [14th August], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

And which Amendment was, to leave out from the word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words—

"in the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens; the nature of the revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India."—(*Mr. S. Smith.*)

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

SIR A. SCOBLE (Hackney, Central) said, that when the Debate was adjourned the previous night he was submitting that under the constitution of Indian society the phrase "desperate poverty" could by no means be applied to the great bulk of the population who lived on the land, and that the taxation by the Government on the land cultivated by the inhabitants was so very light that it could not be considered any real burden on the people. He now proposed to consider for a few moments the case of the rest of the population who did not live so directly by the land and who lived by service and other means. In regard to them, he might say that wages had very much increased in India during the last 30 years, and that the amount of taxation per head of the population altogether, including the agricultural and non-agricultural classes—according to the figures given in an explanatory Memorandum laid on the Table of the House by the Secretary of State for India—reached a very trifling sum indeed. There was no doubt that with regard to the non-agricultural classes the figure 27 rupees, stated by the hon. Member for East Finsbury as their income, was a great deal too small. Their income was much greater. Their taxation was exceedingly light, and at the present rate of exchange only amounted to 15d. per annum—including the tax upon salt of 5d. per head of the population, and which was practically the only tax paid by all but a very small proportion of the people of India. He should like to call attention to a peculiar circumstance which he had come across in his consideration of the question of the Indian currency. The House was aware that nearly all the silver which had gone to India went there when the Mints were open and was there turned into rupees. The net coinage from 1835 to the end of 1892 was a little under 320 crores of rupees. The circulation, which was about 120 crores to 200 crores, had disappeared in 57 years, or an average of 3½ yearly. Taking the 12 years from 1874 to 1886, it was estimated that the yearly loss had been six crores, arising from export, hoarding, and melting. Allowing two crores for export, four crores remained, of which it was calculated that 5-16ths were hoarded, and 11-16ths employed in the arts. As the Census showed that 1,640,925 persons—*i.e.*, about 300,000 workers—were supported by industries connected with gold and silver, this was not an excessive estimate. They could, therefore, see pretty well how these 2,750,000 rupees had been distributed all over the face of the country, and turned into ornaments by these 1,500,000 people engaged in that trade. That showed two things. In the first place, it satisfactorily accounted for the disappearance of this large sum from the currency every year; and, in the second place, it showed that melting did not go on in large centres, but was distributed over almost every village in the country. He did not mean to say that the melting of rupees for ornaments which had gone on for so many years—as everybody knew—was a proof of the wealth of the country. It did not prove that the population were

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

rich, but, at all events, it showed that after they had provided for the necessaries of life they had still a large amount of money which they were able to hoard in the shape of ornaments on the persons of women and children. That, to his mind, was absolute proof of the fact that beyond the necessaries of life the people of India as a body were able to put away every year a very substantial sum of money ; therefore, this cry of the extreme poverty of the people of India must be regarded much more as a political cry than as a cry called forth by the real circumstances of the case. He came to the next point of importance in the arguments of the Mover and Seconder of the Amendment. It was said by the Member for East Finsbury, in effect, that the European Army and Civil Service were the cause of all the misery in India, but the hon. Member for Flintshire did not take that view. He did not believe that view would be entertained for a moment by any considerable body of Members of the House. He thought, on the contrary, the House would approve of what Lord Kimberley said—namely, that

> "we are resolutely determined to maintain our supremacy over our Indian Empire. That supremacy rests upon the maintenance of our European Civil Service and upon the magnificent European Force which we maintain in that country."

But to hear what was said by the hon. Member for East Finsbury one would suppose that this European Civil Service was like a flight of locusts extending over the whole country and consuming everything that came across its path. The Civil Service consisted at most of 1,000 men—1,000 men who governed that numerous Empire. If they made a small calculation they would find that the result was this—there was one civil officer to about every 300,000 people and every 1,200 square miles of the country. Upon that band of officers depended not simply the maintenance of the British rule in India, but the comfort, peace, and prosperity of the Indian people. It was, of course, necessary and indispensable that at the back of these Civil officers there should be that Army of 70,000 British troops which they had in the country. The hon. Gentleman who talked in this way appeared to forget what India was—that it was not a civilised country, however civilised it might have been in the days long past when our own forefathers were savages. India was not now a civilised country by any means. They had there two divisions of the population, separated the one from the other by the keenest and most exciting of controversies—a religious controversy. They had the Mahomedan on the one side and the Hindoo on the other. Our business—a business which we have successfully accomplished — had been to keep the peace betweent he two. We could not have done it without able Civil servants and the Army, and he therefore contended that it was a gross perversion of language to say that they were the cause of the misery of India. A great deal had been said as to the way in which the native Indians had been treated with reference to the disposal of Government appointments. It was more than suggested —almost positively asserted—that successive Governments in India had broken faith with the people, and been false to the promise of the Queen's Proclamation when Her Majesty took over the government of the country. No more unfounded statement could be made. Instead of the close system of appointments which prevailed under the East India Company the Civil Service of India was thrown open to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in every part of the world. The native of India had the same right to compete that Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Canadians, or Australians had, and he had not failed to avail himself of it. In the Covenanted Civil Service there were many native gentlemen. But more than that, he spoke on this point with some authority—for he was a member of the two successive Governments under which the change was carried out—the Government of India, recognising that the distance of England from India and the religious prejudices or convictions as they might please to call them in the case of the high caste natives prevented many from crossing the sea to take part in the competitive examination, appointed a Commission to take the matter into consideration. That Commission was composed of 16 gentlemen, six of whom were natives. That Commission unanimously reported against the scheme, which was supported in this House by the Member for South Edinburgh.

It reported against the institution of simultaneous examinations in India and England for the Covenanted Civil Service. But that Commission made an important proposal. They said that in order to stimulate the aspirations of the better class of the educated natives of India for employment in the Public Service there should be a reorganisation of the Services in India, and that what had been called the Covenanted Civil Service should be called the Imperial Service, recruited as it had been by competitive examination in this country, but that there should be also a Provincial Service open to natives, and including a certain number of the posts which had hitherto been held by members of the Covenanted Service or by military officers. In addition to this Provincial Service there was a judicial and Administrative Service numbering about 2,600 persons, receiving what no doubt the Member for Finsbury would call sufficient if not excessive salaries. Of the 2,600 persons holding these posts, only about 30 were Britons. Of the persons engaged in the Government of India by far the greater proportion were natives of India. The native of India, if he only succeeded in passing the competitive examination for the Imperial Service, attained the highest posts in the administration. Under the circumstances, he failed to see that there had been any breach of faith. But they were told that not only were natives of India unfairly treated in regard to employment in the Public Services, but that they had no voice whatever in the collection or disbursement of the Revenue. Now that was not strictly accurate. Under a recent Act of Parliament—an Act which was suggested by the Government of India—the Legislative Councils which had been established in nearly all the great divisions of India had a right to discuss the Budgets which were presented to them, whether they be the Imperial or Provincial Budgets. Therefore, though they might not have anything particular to do with the collection of the Revenue, they certainly had a voice in the disposition of the Revenue, and without their consent or without the consent of the majorities of these Councils no fresh taxation of any kind could be imposed. They had not, and it would be impossible that they should have, the same voice in the management of the Indian Revenues that this House had in the management of our Revenues, but they had a voice, and a patent voice, which if they chose to exercise wisely and reasonably was sure to be listened to. Now he did not wish to follow in any very great detail some of the arguments with which his hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury endeavoured to support the claim for this Committee, but there was one or two things that he must refer to. Not only in the speech of his hon. Friend, but in a Paper which had been circulated amongst Members of the House, under the taking title of *The Poor Man's Land*, reference was made to what was described as spending the Famine Insurance Fund of the masses to provide exchange compensation for the classes. It was made a great complaint against the Government of India that it had abandoned the provision against the famines which from time to time had hitherto decimated the country, and had applied the money so obtained for the purpose of increasing the salaries of the European *employés*. That was a most unfounded charge. He would not use the adjective he should like to use, but it was a most unfounded charge. He invited the attention of the House to what this Famine Insurance Fund was. The misconception which had arisen showed the disadvantages of giving names which were not strictly applicable to the proceedings to which they referred. For many years before 1878 there had been a series of very serious famines throughout India, and Lord Northbrook's Government, of which Sir John Strachey was Finance Minister, determined to make provision against the recurrence of such disasters. It was determined that instead of providing in the Budget for the small surplus which was always desirable the Government should provide for a further sum of one and a-half crores of rupees, and that that should be applied to certain objects which would enable the Government, in the first place, to relieve actual distress from famine; in the second place, to construct railways and canals for the purpose of diminishing the operation of famine; and, in the third place, to reduce debt. Now that Famine Fund, as it was improperly called—that fund had been more or less in operation ever since 1878. Sir John Strachey, who knew as much about the subject as anybody, in his book on India, which he (Sir A. Scoble) commended to the perusal of hon. Gentlemen who wished to obtain in a very useful form a vast amount of information which would guide them in these Debates, wrote as follows:—

> "The policy of insurance against famine was simple in its nature, but it has considerably been misunderstood. It has often been supposed that a separate fund was instituted, into which certain revenues were to be paid, and which would only be drawn upon for a specified purpose. No such impracticable notion was ever entertained, and every idea of the kind was from the first repudiated by the Government and by myself, who was responsible for the original scheme. The Famine Insurance Fund of which people often talked never existed. The institution was nothing more than the annual application of surplus revenue to the extent of 1,500,000 Rx."

to the purposes that he (Sir A. Scoble) had described. In the years from 1881 to 1894 the amount provided under this head was shown to have been upwards of 16,000,000 Rx., and of that amount had been expended 5¼ crores to the reduction of debt, 5½ crores to the construction of railways and canals, and the balance to the actual relief of distress. As to this year, it was not a fact to say that the Famine Insurance Fund had been entirely left out of the amount, because 43 lakhs out of this year's Budget—that was, nearly one-third of the total amount, were appropriated to famine expenditure properly so-called. He might add that most of the objects for which the fund was instituted—in regard he meant to the construction of railways and irrigation works—had been accomplished. But it had been suggested that money had been taken in order to make an improper payment to members of the Civil Service. In consequence of the great depreciation in the value of the rupee Her Majesty's servants in India had been put to great disadvantages. But, of course, at the time he was a member of the Government this matter was under consideration. It was no new idea that compensation should be given to those officers. It was an idea which had been carried to completion only under the severest stress of circumstances, and he must say that for his own part he thought it better that exchange compensation of this kind should be given to the members of our Services in India rather than that those Services should be rendered dispirited and be discouraged by the pressure of pecuniary circumstances. But to say that the one saving had been made in order to indulge in other expenses was a baseless and unworthy insinuation. He was afraid he had detained the House too long, but before he sat down he would like to refer to a few other points. He had left the question of military expenditure to be dealt with by hon. Gentlemen with a knowledge of the subject, who might follow him. He said that so far from the present embarrassed circumstances of the Government of India arising from lavish expenditure, they arose from circumstances over which that Government had had no control; and circumstances which had been aggravated by the action of Parliament and the Home Government than by any action of the Government of India itself. There could be no doubt whatever that the whole dislocation of Indian finance during the last few years had arisen from the constant and increasing depreciation of the rupee; and this year, in addition to that depreciation, they had such low prices for wheat in the British market that it had not been worth while for English importers to bring wheat from India when they could get it much more cheaply from other sources of supply. But there would have been no deficit this year if the Indian Government had been allowed to have its own way. The commands laid upon the Indian Government by the Home Government had prevented the Indian Government from availing itself of the sources of revenue which lay at its hands, and which it might fairly have used to meet its needs. Had those sources of revenue been availed of by the Government of India the deficit would have disappeared; but in obedience to the demands of Lancashire—demands which, he regretted to say, had been listened to too readily by both sides of the House; demands which had been listened to under the stress of political considerations much more than with a view to the considerations due to our fellow-subjects in India—under the pressure of those demands no Import Duty had been allowed to be levied by the Indian Government on

Lancashire goods. The duty sought to be imposed amounted to about 5 per cent. That could not have seriously damaged the exports from Manchester; and, moreover, if it was contended that the refusal to allow the imposition of this duty was due to consideration for the people of India, he would point out that the President of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce had made a calculation that the whole incidence of the duty would be about three farthings per head of the native population. The people of India did not clothe themselves in Manchester piece goods, from which it was sought by this duty to raise revenue, but they clothed themselves in the cheap products of their own handlooms, or of the mills which had been such a remarkable development in India in recent years. Moreover, it was perfectly certain, with regard to those articles it was proposed to tax, that the great bulk of the yarn which was spun in India could not be made in Lancashire at prices that would find buyers in India; that fully 94 per cent. of the Indian spinnings was of a kind that it would not pay Lancashire to send to India. He must say that he considered the refusal of the Home Government to allow the Government of India to impose this tax was a serious dereliction of duty towards the people of India. He hoped wiser and more generous counsels might prevail, and that this deficit might, after all, be met by the imposition of the duty which the Indian Government recommended. The hon. Member for Flintshire referred to the question of alcohol and narcotics, which he thought it would have been better to have refrained from treating until they had the Report of the Opium Commission. He only wished to repudiate in the strongest manner the insinuation against the Civil servants of India that they desired to stimulate the sale of alcohol and narcotics for the sake of the revenue. Of the many unfounded charges made against the Civil servants of India—charges which had been refuted in the most conclusive manner, and ought not to be repeated—that was, perhaps, the most unfounded, and he would almost say the most disgraceful. To suggest that Englishmen in India—who, after all, were men like themselves, who come from the same class of society, who were impressed with no less a sense of responsibility—to suggest that they had tried to stimulate the sale of alcohol and narcotics for the sake of revenue was, to say the least, most unworthy and most improper. He thought he had shown conclusively enough, he hoped, to shake any preconceived notions in the minds of hon. Gentlemen who had not the same opportunity of obtaining information on this subject as he had, that there was not that foundation for the proposed inquiry which the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire might otherwise lead many Members to suppose there was. As he had said, he did not think the inquiry was necessary. He was sure it would be tedious; he was sure it would be costly; but if the inquiry was granted he hoped it would be limited to those points upon which not so much this House as the people of India, speaking through the Legislative Councils and the Presidents of the Provinces, had expressed a desire for information as to whether they had been treated fairly—namely, with regard to home charges, and particularly to military charges. He could understand that the result of such an inquiry might tend very much to alleviate any feelings of anxiety that might prevail in the minds of the people of India on that subject; but beyond that he hoped the Government would not go. He must congratulate the Secretary for India on the resolution he had arrived at to allow the experiment relating to the Indian currency to have its full effect before any attempt was made to stop it. He was glad to observe from the recent Trade Returns from India that the export trade was improving, and particularly that it was improving with silver-using countries in the East. It was a great deal too soon yet to attempt to form a definite opinion upon the efficacy of the measures taken with reference to the currency. But at the same time he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on that point; and he hoped that before the Debate was over the right hon. Gentleman would convey to the people of India the assurance that this Government, at all events, would rise above mere political considerations or the apprehension of the loss of one or two seats, and give to the people of India the power to meet the deficit that existed by application to the sources they had at hand.

*Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): I congratulate the hon. Gentleman on the very able and impressive speech he has delivered. My only excuse for taking part in the Debate is that I have been the unworthy instrument by which the House of Commons arrived at a Resolution with regard to an important Indian matter, which the Government for reasons they have fully and fairly stated have declined to carry out. The credit of that Motion is in no way due to me. It is due to my hon. Friend the Member for Central Finsbury, and to a man whose memory will always be associated with India—a man who is still respected and revered in every quarter of the House—I mean the late Mr. Henry Fawcett. Apart from the merits of the Resolution, a serious constitutional issue has been raised by the manner in which the Resolution has been treated by the Government. I have received reports of meetings held in India expressing agreement with my Motion. But it is not my Motion, it is the Resolution of this House; and it is very difficult to explain to the educated natives of India why the Resolution of the House of Commons on so important a subject has not been carried out. I can assure the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Central Hackney that I shall not be so presumptuous as to set my opinion against his on any one of the merits of the question. The hon. Gentleman is one of the most distinguished of the distinguished Anglo-Indians in this House. On questions of India I bow to him; and in the arguments I shall take the liberty of presenting to the House I shall assume that every one of the statements he made was strictly accurate, and I shall form my arguments on the basis of the propositions which he laid down. I hesitated long as to whether I ought to take part in a Debate on a subject on which there are so many Members more competent to form an opinion, but being the author of the Resolution referred to I thought it more respectful to the House that I should take this opportunity of addressing a few words to it on the question. It is the only issue raised in this Debate to which I propose to address myself. The hon. Gentleman referred to the refusal of the Secretary for India to allow an Import Duty to be imposed on Lancashire cotton goods. I am what is called a fanatic on Free Trade, and nothing would induce me to vote for any kind of protective duty for any purpose whatever. But that is not the question on which I wish to address the House. This Resolution affirms that certain additional facilities ought to be given for the employment of natives of India in the Civil Service of that country. The hon. Gentleman has stated that the Indian Civil Service is open to the natives of India, as it is open to all subjects of Her Majesty all over the world; and I think he implied that when natives of India have succeeded in obtaining posts they do their duties satisfactorily. I do not understand the hon. Gentleman or any other Member of the House to deny to the natives of India entrance to the Civil Service on the same terms as ourselves. That would be contrary to the Proclamation of the Queen; it would be contrary to the policy of successive Governments, Indian and home. Therefore the question is whether, assuming that the natives of India are to be employed in the Civil Service, the present arrangements give them equal opportunities with us for obtaining employment. That is the real issue raised by the Resolution of the House, and it is that issue I wish to examine. Since the Resolution of the House was passed there has been issued an extremely interesting Blue Book; and if that were the only result of the Resolution it would not have been passed in vain. I think it would be difficult to compress into a smaller space so large a body of information about the Government of India. I fully and frankly confess that, having read the Blue Book, I am convinced that it is the desire of the Government of India freely to admit, in ways they think desirable, the natives of India to subordinate offices in the Indian Administration. I do not desire to make any charge either against the Civil Service of India or the Government of India. I have no doubt that what the hon. Member for Central Hackney said about the Civil servants is absolutely true. But that does not affect the question whether the natives of India have equal opportunities with the natives of this country to enter the Civil Service of India. It is said they may come over here. I have no doubt some few can come, and do come, over here. But I want to know—and I hope the Secretary for India will tell us—what is the real objection to holding the Civil Service examinations in India. Is it that examinations could not be fairly and properly held there, or is it that it is not desirable to increase the number of the natives of India in the employment of the Crown in the Covenanted Civil Service of that country? It is important that we should know upon which of those two grounds the Resolution of the House has not been carried out by the Government. I observe that in a Despatch from Lord Kimberley to the Governor General of India these words occur—

> "I will only point out that it is indispensable that an adequate number of the members of the Civil Service shall always be Europeans, and that no scheme would be admissible which does not fulfil this essential condition."

"Europeans" is an extraordinary word to use. Lord Kimberley did not say Englishmen, or Britons, or natives of the United Kingdom, but he used a phrase which would exclude all colonial subjects of the Queen, and which, strictly construed, would admit foreigners. If it is

> "indispensable that an adequate number of the members of the Civil Service should always be Europeans,"

is that the law? What is there in the present law to prevent every vacancy in the Civil Service of India being filled by natives of India if successful in the examination by open competition? Is that a danger?

SIR G. CHESNEY (Oxford): It is.

*MR. PAUL: Then how does the hon. and gallant Member propose to provide against it? Is it essential that a certain number of offices in the Civil Service of India shall not be held by natives of India?

SIR G. CHESNEY: It is.

*MR. PAUL: That, at any rate, is a straightforward policy; but that is not the question we are now considering. Is it right; is it quite fair; is it honest to say to the natives of India, "You may freely enter the Civil Service by competition; but we will hold the examinations in such circumstances and under such conditions that very few of you will be able to compete"? That is the question. I do not say that it would be possible that all executive administrative offices should be held by natives. But that is not the question which was raised by the Resolution of last year. What I do say is that you should admit them practically to whatever advantages you profess to admit them to; that you should not open a career to them in theory and in the language of despatches, and close it by the conditions which you attach. Now, not the least interesting, but, to me, most interesting part of this Blue Book is the Despatch from the Government of Madras. I have been told that this idea of holding examinations in India comes from ignorant amateurs who, without knowledge of India, propound out of their own brains, or what pass for their brains, theoretical and fantastical expedients. Are the members of the Government of Madras ignorant amateurs? Is Sir Henry Stokes an ignorant amateur? What do they say to this proposal? They say—

> "As regards the expediency of the measure, it is evident, from the tenour of the questions placed before this Government and from the arguments which have been used by the opponents of simultaneous examinations, that it is admitted that under present arrangements natives of India are overweighted as compared with European candidates in the competition held in London. This admission is implied in the assumption that, were simultaneous examinations conceded, the proportion of natives who would succeed would be largely increased, and in the contention that the change would be fraught with various dangers connected with such increase. The inequality in the conditions arises, not from the fact that the examination is adapted to test the education which is given to the best English youth—for that merely means that a high, but not unnecessarily high, standard of instruction is demanded—but from the social conditions of native life, and from the high cost, relatively to the general level of native resources, of a prolonged visit to England for the purpose of preparation for the examination with a chance only of ultimate success."

I think that that argument which is thus so strongly urged, and comes from an official source, will be seen to be the very argument which I and other ignorant amateurs have used. And now I would again ask, what is the real objection? Is it that incompetent men would be admitted if examinations were held in India, or is it that it is desirable by some means to exclude all but a very small number of the natives, and that it is thought proper to do it indirectly and in a manner which does not infringe the Queen's Proclamation and the Statutes? The Government of Madras proceed to say—

> "Assuming that the number of native civilians would be increased, there would not result from the men themselves any danger to British dominion. Their very existence would be bound up in the maintenance of British supremacy. The bulk of them would be employed in the ordinary executive and judicial offices, to the ordinary duties of which, given the high training guaranteed by the conditions of entry into the Service, they may be expected to be quite equal. It is not the incumbents of these offices who determine the principles of administration and legislation which give a character of civilisation and enlightenment to the Government; this depends on laws and orders which, in the present day, district officers have not to initiate and create, but merely to carry out."

That is what the Madras Government think. Native gentlemen must administer the Services as they find them—just as Englishmen, Scotchmen, or Irishmen would administer them, and to say that admitting a larger number of natives would be dangerous is to say that they are incompetent for the purposes of these ordinary executive functions, which has not been said by anyone against the natives, who have hitherto entered the Civil Service by the present method of competition. The Government of Madras go on to say that there might in special emergencies be some disadvantages in the system, but they say also that against the disadvantages of this kind is to be set the increased popularity of the Services. They proceed to say—

> "Another reason for altering the status and position of natives in the Civil Service is to be found in the fact that the new Provincial Service does not in any way satisfy their aspirations and wishes. It is evident that its introduction on the present lines has been a great disappointment to them, that it has relegated them to a distinct and limited Service, and, instead of placing them in line with the rest of the Civil Servants, had confined them to what they consider an inferior and subordinate position, and that this has been accentuated by the designation which had been applied to them, a designation which they have always associated with a distinctly and well-recognised inferior branch of the Service."

The Government of Madras put it as high as a disability—the practice of holding the examinations only in London. One more quotation, and it will be the last—

> "His Excellency in Council considers that it is expedient to remove, by the institution of simultaneous examinations, the disabilities which now tend to hinder the entry of natives into the Civil Service proper. This step will remove an injustice, or what has almost the same consequences, a feeling of injustice, and it will not endanger the British supremacy or impair the character of the administration as a civilised and enlightened Government. It may possibly in certain circumstances weaken executive action, but the disadvantages in this respect are not so certain or so grave as to outweigh the advantages. The increase in the proportion of native candidates selected, is, moreover, not likely to be so great as is supposed, and it would be advantageous to remove the dissatisfaction and discontent which undoubtedly exist among the natives by some such measure as is now under discussion."

Nothing could be more thoroughgoing than that in support of the Resolution passed by the House last year. Of course, I am well aware that other Governments in India have taken a different line. But I have been most fortunate, and I think that those who support me have been most fortunate, in having received such strong and hearty recognition of our views even in one official quarter in India. It is admitted, even by those Governments who are hostile to the change, that there are great drawbacks to the present system. It is admitted in the Despatch from the Government of Bengal. I will not quote the entire words, but they admit that there are serious difficulties, not only as regards the expense of coming over to this country, but in the objections which are entertained by parents to sending their sons so far on the mere chance of succeeding in the competitive examination. It is not contended that they should not come under any circumstances. On the contrary, there are great educational and social advantages in their coming here. Mr. Manomohun Ghose, a leading lawyer in Calcutta, who is well able to speak on this subject, writes to me that he considers it essential that future Civil servants should come to this country. But it should not be necessary for the preliminary examination. I do not wish to detain the House any longer on this subject, though I should like to refer to one of the most interesting Despatches in this Blue Book from Sir Dennis Fitz-

Patrick, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjaub. It is very interesting reading, giving an admirable account of the official natives he has been brought into contact with; and though he is not in favour of this proposal, he is strongly in favour of increasing, as far as may be, the proportion of natives in the Civil Service of India. The hon. Member for Central Hackney referred to the Report of the Commission of 1887. He described it as having unanimously declared against the system of simultaneous examinations. I have not that Report here, but I think it would be more correct to say that the Report was unanimously in favour of a statutory system of examination, because whilst the English members of that Commission did express strong objection to simultaneous examinations the native members, if I recollect rightly, said that they did not share in that objection, and dissociated themselves from it. I admit that the Commission did report in favour of the system that has since been adopted. In this country we have adopted the competitive system, and we have applied it to India. I can quite understand that reasons can be urged why it should not be applied to the Indian Civil Service, but these reasons have not been urged here—or, if they have been urged, they have not prevailed. We have adopted the competitive system, and held out to the natives of India the prospect of rising as high as their abilities and characters can enable them to rise in the administration of their country, and at the same time we insist on imposing on them these vexatious restrictions which largely interfere with, and almost nullify, the prospect which we otherwise hold out to them. I do not think that such a course tends to increase our reputation with the people of India. The Civil Service in India is a Service of which every Englishman is, or ought to be, proud, and I do not think there is an Englishman, or Scotchman, or Irishman who is less proud of it since natives have been admitted to it, or would be less proud of it if natives were admitted in greater numbers. The Secretary of State, acting in accord with the Government of India, has decided that he will not carry out the Resolution of this House. For that the responsibility rests with the Government. It may be said, why did not we, who voted for this Resolution, take some steps to compel the Government to carry out the opinion of the House of Commons. Well, I will tell the House frankly why, in my opinion, it was inadvisable to make any such attempt. If we could have proposed another Resolution—if we could have found an opportunity of moving it—the Government would have sent out an urgent Whip; they would have been supported by gentlemen opposite; everybody would have voted against the Motion who was opposed to it in principle, and all the supporters of the Government who cared nothing about the matter one way or the other would have rallied to the Government's support, and we should have been defeated, and we should have lost the legitimate advantage of having taken the unbiased opinion of the House of Commons. The Government have, so far, been too strong for us. This is a very strong Government. I am not sure that it is not stronger than any Government ought to be; and on this point it has prevailed. I can only hope that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State, as he is strong, will be merciful, and will pay some regard to the arguments which we have urged upon him, and that he will consent to this inquiry. I do not think that this question having been raised, and having been, so far as the House of Commons could decide it, decided, should be allowed to rest. Great use, I am sure, will be made of the Despatch from the Government of Madras. Great use will be made of the important admissions contained in the Despatches of other Governments, though they are hostile to the particular plan we propose. And I am certain that our success in this matter will do great good. I do not say —I do not believe—that our proposals will be immediately carried out. The official element, or the majority of the official element, has been too strong; but if this inquiry were granted, and if this subject, with others, were inquired into, it would be seen whether we are right or wrong. I think we are entitled, after the House has carried the Resolution, and after such an important Despatch has been received from the Madras Government, to an independent inquiry. I do not wish longer to detain the House, but I thought that as the Resolution to which I refer was proposed and carried by me, it was right that I should state the reasons which induced me to believe, in spite of the great weight of official authority against me, that I was right.

Sir G. CHESNEY (Oxford) said, he felt, on some accounts, much sympathy with the proposal of the hon. Member for Flint (Mr. S. Smith) for an inquiry into Indian affairs. If he did not think that the objections to such an inquiry outweighed the advantages to be derived from it he should certainly join in voting for the Motion. He was satisfied that the more light that was thrown on the affairs of India, and on the mode in which that country was administered, the greater would be the credit, both to the Government and all concerned in India. The Government should look inquiry boldly in the face, and he was convinced that nothing but advantage would result from the information supplied. But he saw great difficulties in the way of inquiry. What was it to prove? In the words of the Motion it was nothing less than an inquiry into the whole field of Indian administration. What would be the result of an inquiry into the whole field of English life and government and social conditions and politics, and everything else, if the inquiry were entrusted to a Committee of the House of Lords and Commons? He would ask the House to consider what would be the result of an inquiry of this kind—into the government of India, the political and social conditions, and everything else. Nearly 40 years ago a similar inquiry was instituted, and Committees of both Houses of Parliament collected an enormous amount of most valuable information. Anyone connected with India and with England might look back with satisfaction upon the evidence which was then given. But having collected this information the Members of the Committees found that it was beyond their means to deal with it, and they did not even attempt to draw up a Report; they contented themselves with submitting the evidence as received by the two Houses of Parliament. That was in 1853. The House had only, in connection with the demand now made, to consider how enormously the field of administration had extended. They were informed by the hon. Member for East Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) that they should set out by calling for some preliminary Returns, and that the first of those Returns which would be necessary was a Return of the income of every person in India. He would ask the House to consider what it would cost, both in time and money, to obtain such a Return.

*Mr. NAOROJI said, a specimen of the kind of Return he referred to had already been sent by him to the Secretary of State. It dealt with the total production of India, and set forth what was required for the absolute necessities of every common labourer. There would be no difficulty in the Government supplying the Return, for it simply meant the working up of material which the Government of India already had at their command and could complete.

Sir G. CHESNEY said, the hon. Member was putting it now in a different form. But the information which he required could not be prepared within reasonable time nor with a reasonable expenditure of money, and when ready it would be of no kind of value. No doubt it would be possible to deal with the incomes of persons who carry on all their transactions through the medium of money, but how about the people—about 99 in every 100 of the natives of India—who did not use money at all in the business of life, who lived on their own land, cultivated their own means of support, the food which they exported, the raw materials of the clothing they wore, and the wood and timber of which they constructed their dwellings, and their simple furniture? How were they to ascertain the amount and value of property of that sort? The hon. Member for East Finsbury said that he had himself prepared a Return of the kind which he would like the Government to furnish. But, probably, if the hon. Member's Return were analysed it would be found to be riddled with mistakes. But there was this further consideration: There already existed an amount of information regarding India—statistical, social, and otherwise—which was more complete than was possessed about any other country in the world. India might, in fact, be said to have been worked to death with statistics of all kinds, and what he would suggest was that it would be more practical to make use of the information already available before proceeding to undertake the compilation of a great deal more. Take, for example, the position of the cultivator of the soil. Accounts were forthcoming on this subject from every point of view, collected in the most comprehensive and minute detail. In these circumstances, it would be a waste of time to begin *de novo* with the compilation of similar information. For those reasons, if an inquiry were granted at all, it would be better to confine that inquiry to a very limited number of subjects; for example, to the questions connected with the financial relations of the two countries. From that point of view the Secretary of State might be prepared to meet the wishes of the Mover of the Motion. Now, the hon. Member who seconded this Motion spoke of the way in which India was dominated by this country, and of the way in which its wealth was exhausted. He spoke of the terrible state of the poverty of the people of India. But the hon. Member went back to a period long ago in confirmation of his view, and he failed to gather from him what was the particular remedy or class of remedy which he proposed to meet the state of things of which he complained. As far as appeared, the remedies which he had to propose were the introduction of simultaneous examinations in India and England, and replacing the present English Civil Service as soon as possible by one of a native character. Anybody who listened to the speech of the hon. Member might have supposed that the administration of India was entirely conducted by Englishmen. As a matter of fact, though our territory in India had been increasing year by year, the English Civil Service during the last 30 years had undergone a very considerable reduction by the appointment of natives of India. He ventured to speak upon this subject with some confidence, because no one had expressed himself more strongly than he had done as to what he considered to be the injustice to the people of India of retaining the whole of the higher appointments of the administration for Englishmen. He expressed himself strongly on this subject as far back as 30 years ago. The hon. Member for East Finsbury had omitted to mention that during the last few years the character of the Indian administration had undergone a complete and radical change. Whereas formerly, no doubt, the natives of India were excluded from all high offices, those offices were now within the reach of every man in the country. Moreover, apart from what was called the Covenanted Civil Service, the great bulk of the Civil administration of the country was conducted entirely by natives of India. And when the Member for East Finsbury spoke of the lower posts in the administration, he might have added that these lower posts made up the bulk of the posts which in all countries composed the machinery of the administration, and that some of these posts were as highly paid as corresponding posts in other countries in the world, and that the great increase in the cost of the Civil administration of India in the last few years had been due not to an increase of Englishmen or of the salaries paid to Englishmen, but to the great increase in the number of natives employed and in the salaries which they received. This was a point, and a most important point, which the hon. Member and his friends steadily left out of account. Then the hon. Member spoke of the great drain on the produce of India—the drain of the cost of supporting a European administration and of the payments on account of debt due from India to this country year by year; that if the Civil Service was given over entirely to the natives India would become rich, and the poverty-producing conditions in that country would then come to an end. He believed the hon. Gentleman had been good enough to say that he had not quite made up his mind that India should yet do altogether without English troops; but suppose that the whole Civil Service had been Indianised, was it intended, as the first result of this happy state of things, to repudiate the heavy debts of India? Was the interest on the capital of £140,000,000 laid out on railways in India to be repudiated? Were the other debts of India for money spent for her welfare to be repudiated? If not, what became of the supposition that a great saving or advantage would arise from the substitution of an Indian Civil Service for a European one? He did not think that matter could be seriously considered for a moment. How would such a change lessen the amount of money which the hon. Member for East Finsbury and others complained was being annually abstracted from that country? No one could seriously contend that India could then, any more than she could now, repudiate her responsibility to repay the enormous sums that had been spent for her benefit. It was said that India was discontented and disaffected at being administered by a foreign people. To that extent, no doubt, India was a sufferer beyond what would have been the case, supposing that the same results had been produced by a purely native rule. Supposing that, instead of India having been occupied by the English, the people of that country had worked out their own salvation for themselves, and had established a free Government; that they had put down the state of general anarchy that existed throughout the Empire at the time when the English came upon the scene and assisted them; that they, unaided, had established the irrigation and irrigation works which had done so much to develop the country, then no doubt the complaint that so much money had been annually drained out of India would have deserved the serious attention of the House. But that was not the case. No doubt, year by year, a large sum had been abstracted from India and sent to Europe; that could not be denied. But could anybody say that if the state of things which he had supposed were realised, India would be any better off than she was at the present time? What was the condition of India before England came forward to help her? Just 100 years ago, Twining, as he stated in his *Travels*, marched from Allahabad to Agra and Delhi—across that part of India now known as the North-West Provinces—and he described that region as nothing better than a desert and infested by robbers. Two attacks were made upon him by the way, and he had to organise a strong force of soldiers to protect himself and his party, who hardly expected to get back again to civilisation. Thanks to the wise policy of British rule, that region described as, at that time, a desert had become a perfect garden. That had been entirely the result of our rule. Granting that India had paid large sums of money for the benefits she had received from her European rulers, no doubt it would have been greatly to her advantage if she could have carried out her own reforms unaided. Her case was similar to that of people who were compelled to call in the aid of a doctor or a lawyer. Of course, it would be better for a man if he could cure himself in sickness, or if he could conduct his own law-suit. But nobody would contend that because the man found it difficult to pay for the services of his lawyer or doctor he should not be called upon to do so. The question was, whether India had paid too much? He believed that the benefits which India had derived from the assistance of this country were far in advance of any pecuniary liability she had had to bear in respect of them. Could any reasonable person suppose that if we had been able to at once substitute native for European administration, *per saltum*, the progress of India would have been as rapid as it has been? Then they had been told by the hon. Member for East Finsbury that India was suffering from excessive military expenditure; but anyone who had any practical experience of military matters in India would know that that expenditure had been reduced as far as possible, and he should like to know in what way it could have been avoided. It had been found impossible to further reduce the expenditure consistently with the necessity of keeping pace in military improvements, and of providing the necessary equipments. In that way the expenditure had necessarily gone on. India was held by extremely small garrisons. Hon. Members should not forget that in comparison with other Powers the strength of our Army there was exceedingly small, and that it had been so greatly reduced during the past 30 years that it could not safely be further decreased. Indeed, the Army was now so limited that it was not more than sufficient for the ordinary police duty of the country. Take, for example, the large City of Delhi, with its population of 200,000 persons. If proper control were not maintained there, situated as it was in the centre of a turbulent district, it would speedily return to a state of anarchy. At the present time the troops there were few, consisting of little more than one weak battalion of native infantry, a garrison battery of British artillery, and a squadron of native cavalry. Again, take Bengal, a Province with a population twice as large as that of this country—about 70,000,000. The military forces there consisted mainly of a few battalions of European and native infantry—a mere handful compared with the enormous population over which they had to keep guard. Therefore, he defied anybody to say that the Army was extravagant in numbers. The pay of British soldiers was not large, and the officers were in a state of positive poverty. The munitions of war were certainly not more than sufficient. Complaints had been made with reference to other branches of expenditure, and that there had been a considerable increase in salaries to Europeans in appointments for which natives could not compete. It was not true to say that the Government refused to allow natives to compete for appointments, subject to their fitness, on equal terms with Europeans. In regard to holding higher positions, as far also as the Army was concerned, he thought the time had come when further advantages might be safely offered to natives, and he thought the concessions recently made would work well. Natives had been found efficient and able in the performance of administrative duties. Those duties they had performed with integrity; the result had been eminently satisfactory, and he thought the same principle should be applied to the Army. Natives had certainly proved themselves competent in administrative posts, and they would probably be found capable of filling Executive appointments also. He hoped and believed that that policy would be carried out before long. Under the new Rules it would be possible for the people of India to come to England and take advantage of the examinations. He thought it was said by Lord Macaulay, amongst others, that Indians should be allowed by all means to come over and take their chance, and that if a man showed sufficient superiority to caste feeling to take a voyage to England for that purpose he exhibited so much strength of character that he might be regarded as without doubt fit for the Civil Service. It was never contemplated, however, that the natives of India would, to any large extent, enter into the Civil Service by this method. Now that things had advanced so far he thought the time had arrived when the Government of India should frankly say, "We for the present intend, say for the next 10 years, that the Civil Service of India shall contain a certain number of Englishmen who shall undergo an examination test in England, and that the other members of the Civil Service shall be appointed in India." While competition was an admirable way of selecting Englishmen for the Civil Service it was a perfectly unsuitable way of choosing the people of India for high Executive or administrative posts. By choosing them through the annual competition the Government cut off the very class whom they wanted to associate with them in the government of India—the governing class from whom we had received the government of India, and to whom, in part, he hoped we might entrust it again. When gentlemen came from India and told the House that the one subject which was attracting the attention of the hopeless millions of that country was the question of simultaneous examination, he answered that not one man in a thousand in India had ever heard of competition or anything of the kind. He thought the Government of India and the Secretary for India had taken the wiser course in determining that the avenue of the people of India to high service in the State should be through the Civil Service itself. A guarantee of qualification would thereby be supplied which could be obtained in no other way. Though he deprecated the inquiry suggested, he thought there were some points into which an investigation was highly desirable. An inquiry might well take place into the question of the financial relations, especially in military matters, between India and England. There he thought that India came off very badly. If soldiers were sent on an expedition to some other part of the world possibly Her Majesty's Government paid part of the expenditure, but in almost every case they went on paying the indirect charges arising out of the absence of the troops and the whole of their pay and allowances. The ground on which this was done was that the troops must be kept up in any case, as they could not be disbanded. But when it came to a question of employing British troops in India the uttermost farthing was exacted from the Indian Treasury, which had to provide the recruiting depôts and the cost of the soldiers from the day they were embarked and contribute towards the expenses of every station and establishment in that country. He thought that if a Committee of the two Houses were to examine into that question they would discover that India was not fairly dealt with in regard to it. In large matters of policy also India was very often treated unfairly. There was the case of the last Afghan War, for instance. No doubt it was on the Indian frontier, and undertaken for Indian purposes; but the British Empire had the most potent interest in the issue of that war, and he submitted that the contribution made by the Imperial Treasury to the cost of that war was perfectly inadequate. The hon. Gentleman opposite had raised the question whether, in consideration of the fact that India maintained 70,000 troops in a high state of efficiency, some share of the cost should not be paid by England. That was a question on which much might be said. If the Secretary for India would agree to an inquiry, he (Sir G. Chesney) thought it would be most satisfactory.

*Mr. SEYMOUR KEAY (Elgin and Nairn) said that, in rising to support the Amendment, he desired, in the first place, in a few words to call the attention of the House to the very sharp division of opinion which existed between the gentlemen who had worn the roseate spectacles of official life on the one hand and those who, like himself, had never worn those spectacles on the other. Some inquiry, he thought, was needed for the purpose of bridging over the difference between the views of these two classes of Members. He thought that the two last speakers from the opposite side of the House had entirely missed the chief point of the Resolution now before the House. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had said a great deal in praise of the existing Government of India, but it appeared to him that in singing the praises of the Government of India they were not opposing this Amendment in the slightest degree. He and his friends could just as well sing the praises of the Government of India if they had not more serious matters engaging their attention. It would be an extraordinary thing if a great and magnificent, and enormously costly, Government should exist without accomplishing some excellent work. But what was the point that hon. Members had missed? He said they had missed the cardinal point of the whole Amendment—that however excellent the Government of India might be, they held that the condition of the people of India was such that they could not discharge the enormous pecuniary expenditure connected with it. It was not a question of the value of the Government, but a question as to whether such a Government could be sustained by the people. He desired to say that no inquiry which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India could offer to Members would be in the least degree satisfactory to the people of India, unless there was included in the Reference to the Committee an investigation as to the ability of the people of India to sustain the existing cost of the Government. He had already called attention to the fact that there was a sharp division of opinion on two sides of the House with regard to the ability of the people of India to sustain the present cost of the Government. How were they met by the official apologists for the Government? They all joined in telling them what everybody knew already. They belauded the work they had achieved, but they studiously refrained from tackling the hard matter-of-fact problem whether the people of India were getting richer or poorer. That was the *crux* of the whole question, and for the Government to give them any inquiry which would exclude that material fact from the consideration of the Committee of Investigation would be held by the people of India as nothing but a sham. They had been told from the other side of the House that the people of India, instead of getting poorer, were in a most comfortable condition. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Central Hackney (Sir A. Scoble) told them plainly that in his opinion the cultivator in India, although he had only a small balance arising from his labour, yet had amply sufficient for his wants, while the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir R. Temple) gave a strong denial last night to the statement of his hon. Friend beside him (Mr. Naoroji) when it was suggested that the people of India were not getting richer but poorer. Furthermore, the hon. and gallant Member for Central Hackney said that there had been no breach of the engagements made by the Queen's Proclamation or by the Charter Act of 1833 with regard to the employment of natives in Government Offices. He would like to offer some remarks upon the question as to whether the pledges of the Queen's Proclamation had been carried out. What were those pledges? They were very well stated before a Committee of that House a good many years ago by the late Sir Charles Trevelyan, who gave evidence before the Finance Committee in 1874. Sir Charles told the Committee that the pledges were that the natives should be employed equally with Europeans according to their qualifications; that was set out in the 87th clause of the Charter Act of 1833, and was also contained in a clause of the Queen's Proclamation. Then Sir Charles went on to state his opinion of the qualifications of the natives of India, which, of course, ought to be the only limitation to their employment, as it was in the case of Europeans. He pointed out that there were numerous situations for which the natives were specially qualified, especially as revenue officials, and said that the whole appointments in the Customs might be filled by natives. He went on to say that it stood to reason that if they were fit to be Judges of the High Court they were fit also for subordinate appointments; the Judges had fully come up to the mark not only in ability, but in integrity also; and we should gain in security and popularity and economy by employing them. He would not trouble the House further with references of this sort, but would merely mention that he could quote the opinion of many eminent Anglo-Indians to the same effect. With regard to the employment of the natives he thought he could now show that the pledges given had not been carried out. The late Mr. John Bright obtained a Return, which was now about 10 years old, showing the number and emoluments of Europeans and natives employed by the Government of India at salaries of over £100 a year. He (Mr. Seymour Keay) procured two years ago a moderate extension of that Return, and he proposed to show from its figures whether or no any substantial increase had taken place in recent years in the number and salaries of natives of India employed in the Public Service. The Return, which was granted two years ago upon his Motion, showed that of the 70,000 European population of India other than soldiers no less than 28,000 Europeans held Government posts at salaries of more than £100 a year. These 28,000 European officers divided among them yearly the sum of no less than 154,000,000 of rupees. Not only so, but the Return showed that of these 28,000 gentlemen no less than 33 per cent. lived in this country, and that these drew no less than 60,000,000 of rupees yearly—that was, 40 per cent. of the whole sum was drawn by non-effective Europeans in this country. He was not going to say whether it was necessary or not, but he was showing the financial burden that was cast upon the native population, and it was not open to hon. Members opposite to stand up and say, "Do you say that Europeans should have no pensions or not be allowed to retire to England?" His point was that the charge was an enormous one, which, as he should prove, the condition of the people of India generally did not permit them to pay. Let them contrast the numbers and amounts he had quoted in regard to Europeans with those of natives employed by the Government of India at a salary of £100 a year. There were 287,000,000 of people in India, and of these only 17,000 drew salaries of more than £100, and these native officers only drew 32,000,000 of rupees amongst them. What did this mean? It meant that 28,000 Europeans drew 154,000,000 of rupees a year, and that the native officials of the country, numbering 17,000 only, drew only 32,000,000 of rupees. The absentee Europeans drew 60,000,000 of rupees a year, so that the non-effective Europeans living in this country drew from the public Treasury of India about double the whole amount paid to the whole of the natives of India, who were allowed into the Government service at all, at salaries of over £100 a year.

He had shown that the natives of India were capable persons and could be employed in much larger numbers than they saw exhibited in this Return. Now, with the permission of the House he would ask leave to put before them some really terrible facts showing the state of the people who had in some way or another to find the enormous sums of money necessary to defray the cost of a foreign Government. Last year he himself had a small census taken of a few average villages in the Bombay Presidency, which were well known to the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir R. Temple) who was Governor of the Presidency for two and a-half years. The people of the five villages whose census he took numbered 236 persons. The land farmed by these villagers amounted to 1,400 acres. From the village books he found that the whole gross value of the crops of the year was £193. Through sheer poverty not a vestige of manure had been put upon this land for 10 years. If they allowed only 14s. a year each to these 236 persons for subsistence, and 11 rupees for each of the 58 pairs of agricultural bullocks, the whole net produce of these five villages amounted to £5 sterling in the year. But what did these people pay in Land Revenue? No less than £73, although there was only £5 of real surplus at all.

SIR R. TEMPLE: How did they pay it?

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said, he was glad the hon. Baronet had asked the question. The village books supplied the answer. They showed that the assessment was paid by borrowing from the village usurers at 24 per cent. per annum.

SIR R. TEMPLE: When was this inquiry made?

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said, the inquiry was made two years ago. What did the usurers' books show? They showed that 12,000 rupees were owed by the villagers—that was to say, 10 years of the whole assessment. He said most confidently that that was not an exceptional but a usual condition of the cultivators in the Deccan at this moment. Some doubt might be thrown upon a private census. He would draw the attention of the hon. Baronet to the statements he was about to lay before the House, and he asked his special attention, because he would do a most unusual thing if he was able to get up after him and make a plain answer to an official statement he would now put to the House. Seven years ago—although they had been told to-day by the hon. Member for Oxford that it was impossible to prepare anything like an accurate account showing the condition of the population of India—the Government of India in their secret department and for their own purposes, not only asked for, but got Returns, and adequate Returns, in exactly the sense in which it had been laid down by the hon. Member that it was impossible to obtain them. What was the occasion when this took place, and with what object were these Returns prepared? It might be remembered that about that time a very distinguished officer, who had served the Government of India long and with great ability—Sir W. Hunter—had published a book, and a statement was made in it that became famous. Sir W. Hunter was the Director General of Statistics, and his statement was—

> "that 40,000,000 of the people of India, or about one-fifth, habitually go through life upon insufficient food."

The Government of India having seen this statement, and feeling that it had weight in this country, wanted, if possible, to get hold of statements from their subordinate officers which would be in the nature of a denial of its truth. They therefore sent a Circular to all the subordinate Governments and heads of Departments, which they carefully marked "confidential." He did not know what there was particularly confidential about statements as to whether millions of persons were living on insufficient food; but so it was. He was almost ashamed to say that in connection with this Circular the Government of India did a thing which was unworthy of a great Government. In the Circular they began by misquoting the statement which Sir W. Hunter had made—namely, that—

> "40,000,000 of the people of India, about one-fifth, went through life on insufficient food."

The question which the Government of India put to these officials was whether it was "wholly untrue or partially true that the greater portion of the population of

India suffered from insufficiency of food." He hoped they would get some information how it was that a great Government deliberately misquoted such a statement in this way. To the question as put by the Government he himself should reply in the negative. Sir W. Hunter said nothing of the kind. What he said was that one-fifth part of the people were without sufficient food. But it was with this garbled statement that the Circular went forth. The replies which came in in due course were bound up in Blue Books marked "confidential." Lest there should be any suggestion that he had obtained this Blue Book in an improper way, he might say that they had been given to those Members of this House who had asked for them, as the best way, he believed, of silencing questions about the matter. Although the officials to whom the work was entrusted were deliberately misled, and although it was conveyed to them that they should report in favour of the views of the Government of India, yet the truth cropped out. He would quote from page 44 of the Report in one of these volumes. It was called *A Report on the Condition of the Lower Classes in Bengal.* The officer in charge of the Rampoor district made a census of 12 villages scattered throughout that large district—a district which, roughly speaking, represented 1,000,000 of population. He found in these 12 villages that there were 2,000 persons, of whom 1,600 were cultivators, and the remaining 400 were labourers, artizans, and so forth. What did the 1,600 cultivators do? The officer found that after paying rent and cost of cultivation they had available for their support 16 rupees each; that was £1 per head. The hon. and learned Member for Mid Hackney sneered at the idea that 27 rupees per year was held to be the income of the cultivators; but here the officer in charge of this district told them that the cultivators—that was to say, the better class—had only £1 a head for subsistence money. Then there were 400 labourers, artizans, washermen, &c., who had 17s. per head per year as the whole of their means of subsistence. The next volume gave the result of inquiries into the economic condition of the North-West Province and Oudh. The population of the district in this case was also 1,000,000. The Deputy Commissioner of Rai Bareili had made the whole thing out as clearly as figures could make it. He gave a census of 30 average families scattered in different parts of his large district, these families consisting of 173 persons. The gross yield of the land of these people amounted to £173—£1 a head of the cultivating population. He found that there were swallowed up by the cost of seed, hired labour, and interest paid to usurers, £40, while the rent paid to the Government amounted to £67. What was the result? It was that the balance for the food and clothing of these 173 cultivators—for there were no landless labourers included—amounted to £66, which was about 8s. per head per annum. This was the state of the district of Rai Bareili containing 1,000,000 of souls. The question might again be asked, "How, then, do they live at all?"

SIR R. TEMPLE: Hear, hear!

MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said, it would be difficult for the hon. Baronet to reply to the facts which would be put before him. In the first place, the families of these cultivators made about £47 by labour outside of agriculture altogether. He would give the House the next paragraph of this officer's Report, because it would show how everything was cleared off into the British Treasury which these people and their families could possibly make. Here was a list of the kinds of labour done by these people, which helped them to pay their Land Tax: Salary of village watchman, Rs.4; weaving five pieces of cloth, Rs.1; sold skin of dead bullock, Rs.2; sold butter, Rs.3; made 10 woollen blankets, Rs.10; received present from brother, Rs.60; carrying palanquins, Rs.3; thatching houses, Rs.7; boy 11 years old receives as day labourer 1 anna per day; wife acts as midwife, which brings the husband Rs.6 in the year. What did this show? Why, that even with the help of their outside labour every man, woman, and child in these districts were at this moment compelled to support life as best they could, each on a starvation pittance of 13s. a year. The last instance but one he would give from these Blue Books was from page 209 of the same volume. It consisted of Major Anson's Report on a part of the Fyzabad district, which district contained a population of about 1,000,000. This officer went deeper still, and made out a regular tabular statement of the different degrees of starvation that existed in his district, showing the average amount of food eaten throughout the year by each of the seven classes into which he divided the whole population. He set out with the well-known fact, which certainly would not be controverted from the other side, that a ration of two lbs. of dry grain per head daily was the necessary minimum for a healthy life amongst the agricultural population in India. He then gave the amount actually available to each class, and showed that the cultivating farmer and his family had only five-sixths of the minimum two lbs. food supply necessary for a healthy life. The Indian farm labourer, he showed, had only three-eighths of two lbs. of dry grain a day. Then came the day labourer, who got two-thirds of the two lbs. ration. The petty dealer had three-sixths of the two lbs., and the artisan and servant had just the two lbs. There was a seventh class, consisting of one man in each village—the corndealer himself—and he was certified to be the solitary creature who got more than the two lbs. of grain per day. He would quote one more instance from these valuable Returns. It was from the same volume, at page 171. Another officer, Mr. Harrington, the Commissioner of the Fyzabad District, there and then referred the Government to their own Education Department Reports, and said that they would be found to contain ample evidence of the wretched condition of the people. The Commissioner went on to say that a labourer in Oudh, if he were to send his son to school, would lose 30 per cent. of that which was necessary to preserve life in himself, his children, and his aged relatives. He added—

> "It has been calculated that about 60 per cent. of the entire population are sunk in such abject poverty that unless the small earnings of child labour are added to the small general stock by which the family is kept alive some members of the family must starve."

The Commissioner summed up as follows:—

> "With the bulk of them education must therefore be synonymous with starvation."

Mr. Seymour Keay

The same Commissioner said that one-half of the population of large districts were actually forced to sell themselves into slavery in exchange for mere food, and that every second man in the fertile plains of Hissampore was now a bond slave. The Commissioner then concluded by urging the Government of India to do what the supporters of this Amendment were to-day urging Her Majesty's Government to do. He said—

> "I call upon the Government no longer to defer the necessary step of appointing strong Commissions to review the data and experience already gained, to make such further inquiry as may be necessary, and to map out a line of action."

What did the officials of the Indian Government do when they got these Reports? Did they carry out the recommendations of the Commissioners? Nothing of the kind. They labelled these valuable Reports "confidential" in red printed letters, and buried them in the cellars of Calcutta in the hope that they would never be seen by anyone. The first Member of the House of Commons who got a copy of them was the late Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, and he had told him (Mr. Seymour Keay) that he had had the very greatest difficulty in getting it, and that it was only through his persistence that the Government came to the conclusion that the best way to quiet him was to put the whole of the five volumes into his hands.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): They have been published.

*Mr. SEYMOUR KEAY said, they had certainly not been officially printed. He hoped that when the supporters of the Amendment asked for bread the Government would not offer them a stone by saying he would grant an inquiry respecting the Budget and its accounts. He thought it would be well to adopt the Reference of the Committee of 1871, which, as was shown by the evidence, proved sufficient for its purpose. The Order in that case was—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the finance and financial administration of India."

The division between the Indian experts in the House, who took opposite sides on this question, was so marked that it ought to be enough to secure a Reference sufficiently ample to enable the House and the country to arrive at a distinct conclusion as to whether the pessimistic view of the supporters of the Amendment or the optimistic view of the gentlemen opposite was the true one in regard to the condition of the Indian people.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) said, he would not go into the particulars to which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had referred, because he thought he should be unduly taking up the time of the House if he did so. In his opinion, the calculations quoted by the hon. Member were not worth the paper they were written upon or the breath in which they were uttered. Those who made such calculations took figures which were supposed to represent certain products and put their own value upon them, the whole of the details being supposititious, and they drew from them conclusions which were on the face of them impossible. If these calculations were right, the people of India would not be living at all; the land would have no market value, and nobody would lend any money upon it. Yet, while quoting these calculations the hon. Gentleman almost in the same breath spoke of the large sums of money advanced by local bankers on the security of land. The hon. Gentleman had quoted the opinion of some authorities with whom he (Sir R. Temple) was not acquainted. He thought these gentlemen took a one-sided view of affairs, but because they happened to coincide with the opinions of the hon. Gentleman they were quoted, and all the other authorities on the question were left unquoted.

*Mr. SEYMOUR KEAY, interposing, said, he had quoted facts and not opinions.

Sir R. TEMPLE said, the supposed facts were no facts at all. All that these gentlemen could possibly know was that there were so many people on the ground and that there were so many acres. The calculations mentioned were snares and delusions. He (Sir R. Temple) would rather take certain general facts which could be tested. He could not undertake to say how a particular peasant family lived, but he knew what the general statistics were. He knew what the area under cultivation was, what the ratio of the increase of population was, what was the expansion of trade, and what the exportation of food stuffs amounted to. It was said that the people of India were starving, although they were exporting grain to such an extent to England that they were seriously disturbing the prospects of British agriculture. It was said that the people of India were sinking into poverty, although during the last decade they had shown the greatest increase of population recorded in the annals of the human race, the population having increased by 30,000,000 within 10 years. It was said that agriculture was depressed. How, then, was the constant increase and growth of agricultural operations in India to be accounted for? His hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) said the taxable capacity of the people was low. This was quite true, but then the taxation was light. The poorer classes of the Indian people were the lightest taxed people in the world. As to the figures given by the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji), he (Sir R. Temple) did not know exactly what the value of a peasant's produce might be; but he certainly knew what was the rate of wages amongst the poor, and it might be assumed that no man of any industrial capacity would make less than the current rate of wages. The poorest man in India could earn five rupees in a month when he (Sir R. Temple) lived there, but he thought he could earn more now. Five rupees came to 60 rupees a year, and could anyone say a poor man in India had to pay more than two rupees out of the 60 in taxation. If he paid two rupees, he paid 1-30th of his income. A farm labourer in England earned, say, £35 a year. Would anybody say that he paid less or more than about £2 a year in taxation, or 1-17th of his income? He did not want to give these as calculations which were perfectly accurate to a decimal or a fraction, but he said that something of this sort was the truth. That being so, the poor man in England paid 1-17th of his income in taxation, while the poor man in India paid only 1-30th of his. As to the general condition of the people of India, how could those who were exporting food stuffs to such an enormous extent, and increasing the population so fast that one scarcely knew what would become of them all, be said to be dying of starvation? This was the answer to be given to the speculations of Indian officials, and to the haphazard calculations of amateur statisticians. Something had been said about the proportion of the people insufficiently fed in India. The statement was based upon reasoning of the most vague and general character. As to the contention that there was not sufficient food in India, there was not a shadow of data for it. He quite admitted that it was highly probable that a certain proportion of the people of India were insufficiently fed, but he contended that this might be said of any nation under Heaven. It certainly might be said of people in England, and more particularly of people who lived within the Metropolitan area. His hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith), for whose talents, capacity, and personal virtue he had the highest possible admiration, went on saying year after year that the people of India were poor. If when he said that he meant that their earning power, compared with that of the European, was small; that their taxable capacity was small, and that their incomes were small, he was no doubt perfectly right; but if he used the word "poor" in its proper scientific sense, as meaning that there was no margin between a man's income and the absolute necessities of life, the people of India were not in that sense as poor as the people of England. He had spent 25 years amongst the poorest classes of India, and 15 years of active life amongst the poorest classes of this country. Taking sorrow for sorrow, anxiety for anxiety, the people of India were no poorer than the people of England. Those were two points in the speech of the hon. Member for Flintshire (Mr. S. Smith) that he would like to refer to. All the hon. Member knew was from conversations and correspondence with a certain number of educated people and a limited class in India; but that was not a knowledge of native opinion, and the hon. Member must forgive him if he declined, and if he asked the House to decline, to accept unreservedly his account of native opinion. The hon. Member alluded to their frontier arrangements, to the long line of military fortifications to protect the country against possible invasion, and without attempting to criticise his hon. Friend's geographical knowledge, he would ask him whether he could, in his conscience, say he had given to this subject the attention it really deserved before making comparisons in regard to it in the British House of Commons? He would further ask the hon. Member whether he had given attention to the most intricate and important recommendations of Her Majesty's Government? This was one of the most difficult questions they could imagine, and he could hardly conceive that a busy Member of Parliament like his hon. Friend, who was engaged in a hundred important and beneficent pursuits, could possibly find time to study such a question. He would appeal to his hon. Friend whether he was not wrong in venturing to offer to the Secretary of State the recommendation that he did? The hon. Member spoke of a perpetual settlement, and he would remind him that the perpetual settlement in Bengal was considered one of the two gigantic mistakes the British Government had made in India. When the great economic change came upon them, they found they had sacrificed millions of money for next to nothing, money that might have been employed to the advantage of the Indian dominion and the benefit of the native population. That was the result of the perpetual settlement of Bengal—and he ought to know, having governed that country. He deemed it his duty at the time to uphold that settlement, because it had been made, though he then saw, as everyone now knew, the dangers that would be brought upon Indian finance by that most unfortunate, premature, and ill-considered measure of the Marquess of Cornwallis.

Mr. S. SMITH said, what he meant was the perpetual settlement for the cultivators.

Sir R. TEMPLE said, that what he stated as to Bengal was that it gave them an example of a settlement they should avoid, and which they could never forget. With regard to what fell from the hon. Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Paul) respecting the simultaneous examinations in England and India, he must congratulate the Government on having had the courage, the foresight, and the statesmanlike capacity to go against a Resolution even of the House of Commons. As they all very well knew, it was not a Resolution of the House at large, but was a Resolution carried on a Friday night by a snap Division. Whatever promise was made in 1833, or 1854, or any other year, to the people of India had been religiously kept. There was no desire on the part of anyone to restrict the admission of natives to the Civil Service; but the danger was that if examinations were held in India the Service would be flooded by natives. There was the fear also of a great number of places being won by men who were absolutely alien to the people of India; and he was informed that the natives of Madras, foreseeing that danger, begged the Government that they might be governed by Englishmen rather than by Begalis. Competitive examination was not the best and most important test for India, and he believed the best plan was to entrust to the various Governments the power of selecting their own officers from amongst the natives in their own Province, from those who were qualified by birth, aptitude, probity, and position to be taken into the covenanted Civil Service. Those were the men who would be popular, and not the men who were merely the alumni of the various Universities. His hon. Friend, if he might so be allowed to call the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji), spoke as a member of one of the most honoured races in the world, amongst whom he (Sir R. Temple) counted many of his best friends; but when his hon. Friend spoke on behalf of the natives of India, he did not do so in the sense a native Mahommedan would, but spoke very much as he (Sir R. Temple) did—as a person who had resided there a long time. The hon. Member in support of his views quoted a great number of persons, himself (Sir R. Temple) among the number, but he was afraid the hon. Member had studied him very imperfectly, because at all events he was not to be classed as one of those who took pessimist views. It was quite possible, by taking particular extracts, to make any case they liked about any country in the world; but if the hon. Member meant to say that Englishmen were insensible of the greatness of the country, or of the splendid deeds that had been done, and of the marvellous results that the natives had obtained, then the hon. Member did them the greatest injustice, for they were not unmindful of the magnificent results that had been attained. They often heard of rose-coloured spectacles, but he would ask the House to judge whether there were not such things as green, blue, and black spectacles worn by hon. Gentlemen opposite? The hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) alluded to the loyalty of the educated classes in India—educated in the sense of having Western knowledge. He had had many friends belonging to that class, but he could not shut his eyes to the fact that a great many things had happened in recent years which were calculated to shake the faith of those who believed in the loyalty of all the natives of India. If the Congress people had taken part in proceedings which caused suspicion and apprehension as to their loyalty, they had only themselves to blame. If they said they were loyal he would accept the assurance, hoping only that they knew thoroughly their own sentiments when they gave that assurance. If an opinion unfavourable to their loyalty was present in the minds of many people, an explanation of its presence was found in the injudicious character of many of their proceedings. It was no use handling this grave question with a velvet glove. What would the Congress people do if they had the power? They would reduce all taxation; they would send home a great part or the whole of the European Army; and they would dispense with all European Civil officers. What would become of the Public Debt in those circumstances? He did not know, but he supposed the country would follow the example of Greece and Portugal and other nations, and when all this had happened and ruin had been brought on those in England who had trusted India, the country might come to be viewed as the prey of rival Powers in the East. Then, when India was suffering under the competing efforts of France, Germany, and Russia; when she saw herself between Scylla and Charybdis, she would expect us to send out a fleet and an army to relieve her from the embarrassments which she would herself have created, and to rescue her from the dangers of her situation. It was time that this ruinous and, in effect, disloyal policy should be unmasked. We had given the Indian people an infinite number of things for which they should be thankful. We had given them peace and tranquillity, security in landed property, equal laws, impartial administration, moral training, and education. We had, in fact, given them everything that we enjoyed ourselves, reserving only our military and political control and the command of the Civil Service. If those things were to be conceded there would be an end of our domination. They had heard our policy spoken of as the evil policy of domination. He did not know whether that sounded a very loyal phrase to English ears, but he must leave the House to judge of its loyalty. Remembering how we had granted absolute freedom and equality before the law to the natives of India, he did not like to hear such words as "British slaves." As to the speech of the hon. Member for Nairn (Mr. Seymour Keay) he did not exactly know what was meant, but at all events he did not like to hear such expressions as "British slaves."

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY said, he did not use the word "slaves," but alluded to what the Blue Books referred to as the bonded slave contract.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, that was exactly what he meant, and he objected to the words "British slaves," which did not come well from an hon. Member who had used them.

*MR. NAOROJI said, the words "our slaves" were used by Macaulay.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, he should like to hear the entire passage, but he certainly heard the words fall from the hon. Member. He did not wish to detain the House longer than he could help, but there was one matter in which he was inclined to agree with the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji). That was the only point in the speech of the hon. Member with which he agreed —namely, that it would be wise to do more to encourage the development of native character by entrusting to natives certain public duties which should be performed voluntarily as similar duties were performed here. There was one matter he should like to mention before he sat down. His attention had been drawn to a statement made in a paper read before the East India Association by Mr. Rogers, a former member of the Council at Bombay. That statement was that statistics showed that sales in default of payment of land revenue were much more frequent in the Madras Presidency than in other parts of India. This matter was, he thought, worthy of the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India and his constitutional advisers. He thought he might conclude his brief observations by strongly urging the Secretary of State not to be dismayed by the statements that had been made and which constituted an amount of one-sided exaggeration and unintentional misrepresentation that was remarkable. It represented a character of India which might be presented *pari passu* with that of our own country or of any other civilised country. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would persevere in the good work he was doing to the satisfaction and admiration of all those who were concerned in the administration of India. He had the greatest admiration and respect for the services which the right hon. Gentleman had conferred not only upon his Party, but upon the country in many departments of the State; and remembering that the right hon. Gentleman had achieved wonders in the past, he believed he would still achieve greater ones in the future.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banff) said, that in considering Indian grievances he sometimes wondered whether the people of India were worse off when the Tories were in power or when the Liberals were in power, because, under neither Administration was there any proper or effective control kept over official proceedings in India. The people of India had practically no voice at all in the management of their own affairs. The Government in India was a Government of officials for officials and by officials, and the policy that was carried out in India was practically dictated by a small clique at Simla, a Civil and Military clique, whose tendency was towards aggression abroad and repression at home. Under these circumstances the people of India had constantly to appeal to the Government at home and to the House of Commons in order to get redress of their grievances. When the Tory Party were in power it was true they had a kindly feeling towards what was called a spirited foreign policy such as took us, for instance, to Afghanistan on more than one disastrous occasion, and which had taken us to Burmah and caused the present great difficulty in our finances. There was no doubt the Tory Party had sympathy both with a spirited foreign policy and also with that race and official privilege to which the official classes in India clung very strongly. On the other hand, when the Tory Party were in power the Indian people had the great advantage, when such a policy was followed, of hearing it denounced by the great, and wise, and eminent, men who then sat on the Front Bench on the Opposition side. But, unfortunately, when the Liberals came into power, and there arose a hope that Liberal principles would, as far as possible, be applied to the management of Indian affairs, those voices of denunciation were hushed, and the Liberal Secretary of State then spoke with the voice of the India Office and with a feeling of trust in the officials rather than of trust in the people of India. He recognised that the position of the Secretary of State—influenced as he was by a Council composed chiefly of the very officials who, in Simla, carried out the policy of which complaint was made and afterwards in Whitehall were the right hon. Gentleman's principal advisers, and by a certain number of Members of that House who had been connected with India—was a difficult position, and that it was almost impossible for him to take any view of Indian affairs that was not coloured by official influence. The right hon. Gentleman's advisers were extremely able men, but they had the great defect that they were the very people who carried out those measures of which the people of India complained. Very hard things had been said of them. He would quote the words said of them by a great political Leader, whose utterances, he was sure, would carry weight with gentlemen on the other side. This political Leader said—

> "When formed exclusively in India, men brought up in the Military or in the Civil Service of that country, might be gifted with great intelligence, and possess great knowledge, but born as they had been in the abuses of the system, they were not sensible of these abuses; and with such men exercising supreme authority you could not feel sure that you would be able to obtain for the inhabitants of India that redress from the grievances under which they suffer that English protection ought to secure."

Those were not the words of a faddist or an agitator, but the words of Mr. Disraeli in speaking in the great Debate of 1858. The ground of complaint which he and others took was that there was no adequate machinery for bringing forward and redressing the grievances of the people of India, and the natives complained that, in cases of injustice in India, the Court of Appeal should be composed of the very officials against whose acts they protested. Owing, moreover, to the pressure on the time of the House of Commons, there was no opportunity of bringing those grievances before Parliament. In view also of the differences of opinion that prevailed, it was only reasonable, therefore, that a strong and independent Committee of Inquiry should be appointed to ascertain the real facts of the question. Another important point was to decide which was the right view to take with regard to the position of this House and the Government of India—both of the Government of India in India, and the Government of India in England. On this point he should like to refer to a speech which was made by the late Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, at a public dinner in the Royal Exchange in Calcutta. Lord Lansdowne said that the great danger to India lay in the tendency to transfer power from the Indian Government to the British Parliament—

> "That Parliamentary power perpetually exercised by irresponsible persons constituted a grave menace to the Empire; that the tendency of the Legislature was to usurp the functions of the Executive, and that such usurpation marred the Government of India by upsetting the policy of a body of experts by another body swayed by emotions and sentiment."

It seemed to him a curious thing that any Viceroy or anyone employed by the Crown should talk about the transfer of power from the Indian Government to the British Parliament. Surely the power lay with Parliament already. What did the Viceroy mean by talking of transferring power from the Indian Government to the British Parliament? He said it was already with the British Parliament and remained with it, and it was only in Parliament and in the Crown that any power could lie. Then, again, Lord Lansdowne spoke of Parliamentary power perpetually exercised by irresponsible persons. Who were the irresponsible persons? Were they Members of this House? He said they were not irresponsible persons, for they were responsible to their constituents. The people who were irresponsible sat in another House altogether. Lord Lansdowne further said that the Government was marred by the policy of a body of experts being upset by another body—that was the House of Commons—which was swayed by emotions and sentiment. He never heard before that the policy of the British Empire was decided at Calcutta or by any experts employed under the Crown. The policy both as regarded the Empire and India was settled by Parliament and the Crown, and the idea of Parliament upsetting the policy of their own servants appeared to him grotesque indeed. What did Lord Lansdowne mean by this body being swayed by emotions and sentiment? He said it meant that this body was accessible to justice and humanity. He was sorry to say that the speech of Lord Lansdowne was quoted with approval in the other House. It was important to refer to it, because he admitted that there was a certain amount of truth underlying what his Lordship said, though it was said in an unbecoming way on a most unbecoming occasion. He fully granted that India should be administered mainly in India, but subject to highly important conditions, one being that Indian public opinion should be heard and considered by those who administered in India, and the other that the administration should be in strict accord with the policy laid down by Parliament and the Crown. The different functions that the House of Commons should exercise, and also the India Office, and the Government in Calcutta were, he thought, very well stated by Mr. Roebuck in a very notable speech he made in the same Debate of 1858. Mr. Roebuck said—

> "It was necessary to draw a distinction between the government of India in England and the government of India in India, and a clear distinction must be recognised between the two in all arrangements for the government of that country. First, they had to arrange the machinery in England which should bring to bear upon the actual Governors of India the opinion of the Parliament and people of England, and make them realise their responsibility to that opinion; and, secondly, they had to constitute the Government in India which should carry out their plans when they had been matured in England. For the first operation they did not require any knowledge of the people of India, a knowledge of the general principles of human nature being all that was required."

Without going quite so far as regards this last point, he considered that the most valuable protection the people of India had—and they knew they had—was the humanity and common sense and knowledge of business of the public men who sat in this House, even if they had no special acquaintance with India at all. Thus Mr. Roebuck's scheme was that Parliament should lay down the principles of government, that the Government in India should carry out those principles, and administer in accordance with those principles, and that the Secretary of State for India should see that they did it. Those were the functions, and they seemed to him to be quite clear. If Members of this House appeared sometimes to be irresponsible in this matter, and sometimes to take up what seemed to be small matters of detail, it was because the people of India had no reasonable voice in the original administration of affairs there, and because they did not consider the India Office was sufficient to act as an impartial Court of Appeal to redress the grievances that were brought before them. He entirely agreed with those who would not interfere with the Indian Government as long as it was in harmony with the wishes of the people there, and as long as it carried out the general principles established in this country, and he quite realised the danger that arose if the Central Authority in ordinary administration matters was brought either into the India Office or on the floor of this House. With regard to the Famine Insurance Fund, he said that the Fund was formed from the proceeds of a special tax imposed in order to construct that Fund. The apology for levying the tax at that time was that it was to be solely and exclusively used as a famine insurance. When the people of the country, knowing the difficulty of enforcing the arrangement, came to Lord Lytton and begged that the money should be paid into a special Fund, and expressed doubt that it might not always be maintained for that purpose, Lord Lytton rebuked them severely by saying that the mere suspicion of this was a calumny. But this was now the very thing which the Government had done. The reckless manner in which the Fund had been used in giving indiscriminate compensation to the European Services at a time of great difficulty was what was objected to. The man who had taken service when the rupee was worth 2s. might be entitled to compensation, but not the man who came in and accepted service when the rupee was worth 1s. 1d. And yet the scheme of compensation equally compensated the man who joined the Service to-day as the man who joined 20 years ago. He said that was a most reckless thing, and defeated the operation of the natural law which would have tended to the economical employment of the people of India in the services of the Government. In asking for an inquiry, they were only asking for what the wisdom of their ancestors had found to be beneficial in former times, as was illustrated by the inquiries of 1813, 1833, and 1853. Instead of danger, safety came from these inquiries, and the great danger came from refusal to make inquiry, and to make that arrangement by which the redress of reasonable grievances could be obtained.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): I think I may say, before going into matters of detail, that I think the course which the Government has followed this year has been one which has not turned out a failure. The previous practice has been to discuss Indian affairs only during the last stages of the Appropriation Bill; the Debate on the Indian Budget has occupied generally but one Sitting of the House, and it has rarely occupied two. This year, however, we began this interesting Debate last night, and it has lasted through this afternoon. I hope the House will not think me unreasonable in pressing upon hon. Members the desirableness of allowing the Speaker to leave the Chair before the close of the Sitting, so that the Budget may be taken the first thing to-morrow. I have rarely listened to a Debate which has been conducted so entirely by gentlemen who are themselves conversant with the matters on which they spoke and from personal knowledge on one side or the other of the difficulties with which we are dealing. Although there has been an expression of very contrary opinions with reference to some of the great questions submitted to the House, the whole Debate has been conducted with good temper and with a due appreciation of the difficulties which Great Britain has in governing India, and also with the desire, in discussing and deciding these questions, that the one supreme and ruling consideration should be the benefit of the people of India. That is the sacred trust which has devolved upon us; and although we may differ as to what is the wisest and best mode of discharging it, yet our motives are the same—to discharge it honourably and well. This Debate has travelled over a wide area. I shall endeavour to avoid questions which are purely financial, so that they may be discussed in their proper place on the Budget to-morrow. But I cannot forget that the Mover and Seconder of the this Resolution have certainly brought before the House and the country a very strong indictment of the British Government of India; and if I did not object to that indictment and attempt an answer, the Government might be taken as accepting some of the conclusions at which these hon. Gentlemen have arrived. While I appreciate all that my hon. Friend has just said with reference to India, as to all other parts of the Empire, of the supreme power of Parliament, yet my hon. Friend recognised the possible danger of discussions here assuming a certain character which might disturb administration there. I will not follow him on that point, or in the illustrations he has given, and I agree with some of the sentiments he has uttered. But I must point out that the views and statements of my hon. Friends who moved and seconded the Resolution will be repeated, reprinted, and read throughout the length and breadth of India. If our government of India has been, as described by the hon. Members, so gigantic a failure that it has produced a general feeling of deep discontent and dissatisfaction with British rule, I think that we are bound, at all events, by the dry light of fact to see whether this indictment is correct. But my hon. Friends alleged a general feeling, which they said came from India, of deep discontent and dissatisfaction with the existing mode of government, and the illustrations which they gave were, in the main, confined to finance. It was the financial administration of India which they contended was defective, unjust, and extravagant. Two or three years ago my predecessor came to the conclusion—I think a wise one—looking to the number of years that had elapsed since the British Government undertook the government of India, that the time had arrived when there should be a searching inquiry as to what had been the practical result of Imperial government in India since the East India Company was brought to an end. No reference has been made to that most interesting inquiry in any of the speeches delivered today. I consider that most of the facts brought out in that inquiry are pregnant with a great deal of information and with a good deal of teaching for the House in discussing the questions brought before it. I propose to draw the attention of the House to several salient points in that inquiry, taking the starting-point 30 years ago. You cannot test the progress of a Government by one, two, or five years. You must take much longer periods in order to test the government of India by the Imperial Parliament, for that is practically what the government of India is now, as carried on by a Secretary of State and Council responsible to Parliament. The question I wish to consider is whether that Government, with all its machinery as now existing in India, has, or has not, promoted the general prosperity of the people of India; and whether India is better or worse off by being a Province of the British Crown. That is the test. If we have been influenced by the powerful speeches we heard last night, and especially by that of the hon. Member for Flintshire, we must have come to the conclusion that it would be better if India had not been connected with us at all, and that our government of that country has been a great failure. The hon. Baronet opposite expressed just now the wish that my hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire had made himself more completely acquainted with all the facts of the case. My hon. Friend told us that his acquaintance with India commenced 30 years ago, and I think that although a good many of the pictures which he drew might have been true 30 years ago, they are not true when applied to India to-day. I wish to draw four or five points of contrast between the state of things which existed then and those which exist at the present time. I will take first the question discussed this afternoon, especially by the Member for South Edinburgh, with reference to the employment of natives in the administration of India. Whether hon. Members agree or disagree with the policy of the Government in regard to a small section of officers in the Civil Service, they will, I believe, all concur in expressing a strong desire that the natives of India should take as large a share as possible in the administration of that country; and that the tact and experience and competency of those gentlemen should be employed in the service of their native country. My first contrast will be in regard to the employment of natives in India. When the English Parliament took over the government of India there were no natives on the Bench of any supreme or chief Court in India; there was no native in the Covenanted Civil Service; and practically the administration was carried on to a great extent by Europeans. I will leave out of consideration the question of the higher Civil Service. The entire number of appointments in the higher Civil Service is 898, and of these 93 are now available for natives. But of far more importance is the question of the Judges. There are now native Judges in every one of the High Courts in India. The superior officers in the administration are drawn from services of which the overwhelming majority are natives. There are seven natives in the Governor General's Council; 10 in the Council of the Governor of Madras; 10 in that of the Governor of Bombay; 10 in Bengal; and six in the North-Western Provinces. Taking the provincial and subordinate services, numbering 3,135 officers, the overwhelming majority are natives; and the whole of the Government offices are almost entirely manned by natives. In the direction of the employment of natives we have made great progress during the past 30 years, and we shall, I hope, continue to make still further progress in the future in that direction. The second point is decentralisation. At the time I am speaking of the Government of India was an absolutely centralised Government. Since that time the administrative, the judicial, the revenue and the executive business has been more than doubled. Not only has the administrative business been transferred to Local Authorities, but a system of local self-government has been founded, which, to a great extent, is in the hands of the native inhabitants. Seven hundred and sixty-one municipal towns have Municipal Corporations and possess an income altogether of 4,000,000 or 5,000,000Rx. There are a large number of District Boards performing, and performing satisfactorily, their respective duties, levying their own taxes, spending their own money, and carrying on very much the same work of administration as that which is carried on by Local Government Bodies in England. There is, in fact, a distinct beginning of a large system of local self-government in India. I take next the administration of justice. A large majority of the Judges and Magistrates at the present time are natives. Nine-tenths of the Civil suits and three-fourths of the Magisterial business of the country come before native Judges and Magistrates, who discharge their duties to the satisfaction of the public. Last year more than 2,000 native honorary Magistrates dealt with the Magisterial business of the towns and rural districts; 30 years ago things were quite different. I could give similar illustrations in regard to the judicial machinery of Police and Criminal Courts. All these are the rudimentary effects of efficient government, and all this has grown up under the rule of the Imperial Power. Let me now go to another branch, where we are advancing to a still higher plane. Thirty years ago there were 142 hospitals in India, in which 671,000 patients were treated. Last year there were 1,879 hospitals; the number of in-patients was 290,000, and the number of out-patients over 14,000,000. The same thing applies in reference to sanitation, which 30 years ago was an unknown science in India. Increased sanitation is now developing year by year, and the water supply in most of the large towns is being greatly improved. Another test which will interest us is the test of the schools. The statistics of 30 years ago are very incomplete, but, according to the best opinion, there were then only about 400,000 scholars at school. The first year for which there are complete statistics is 1865, and in that year there were 19,000 schools and 619,000 scholars. The number of schools has now risen to 142,000 and the scholars to nearly 4,000,000. Then, take another test—the test of the development of the railways. I do not know a better test of the improvement of a country than the railways. Nothing has been more important than the improvement effected by the railway administration in India, and the construction of the railways has been a great source of prosperity to the country and a most important cause of its increased wealth. Thirty years ago there were in India only 300 miles of railways, carrying annually 2,000,000 passengers and about 250,000 tons of goods. Last year there were 18,459 miles of railways, which carried 127,000,000 passengers and 26,250,000 tons of goods. We pass, then, to the trade, and find the same evidence. The entire trade has gone up from 40,000,000 to 204,250,000. Agriculture, again, shows the same reresults. Take the one item of tea for example. During the past 30 years the tea industry in India has been practically created; last year India exported nearly 120,000,000lb. But most important of all is the condition of the people. You could not have a people plunged in ever-increasing poverty and going from worse to worse, as some would have us believe, indulging in increasing public expenditure, constructing large public works, and improving the moral and material condition of the people and their resources. The condition of the people is fully discussed in the interesting Report from which I am quoting, and in that Report Lord Cross, the then Secretary of State, points out that it must be borne in mind that in rural India, from the nature of the climate, the poorer classes have fewer wants than in this country, and can satisfy those wants more easily than the poor of England can satisfy theirs. The average Indian landholder, trader, ryot, or artisan consumes more salt, he consumes more sugar and tobacco, than he did generations back. A careful analysis of the condition of the people has been made, and the Reports show the condition of the people, especially the small landowners, and show facts directly in contradiction to the statements we have just heard. In a certain portion of Bengal and Oudh, and in certain other districts, there is undoubtedly much poverty. No one, of course, will maintain that there is not great poverty in India. There is great poverty there; but my point is that under British rule that poverty is not increased, but diminished. I very much regret its amount, and I can assure the House that no one is more anxious than I am to take every possible step to reduce that poverty if it can be diminished; but, so far from the poverty of India being attributable to British administration, the facts show exactly the opposite. I am not now going into the question of the Revenues of India and taxation, because I shall have to trouble the House on that subject to-morrow. The ordinary debt of the country, exclusive of money borrowed for public works, which I call reproductive, which was Rx.103,000,000 in 1877, is now only 76,500,000. With reference to another point of the hon. Member for Flint—namely, the deficits in the Indian Exchequer, which, he says, are a proof of the poverty of the country. I must demur to the statement that deficit after deficit is being piled up. On the contrary, in recent years there have been surpluses. The last two have been bad no doubt owing to the loss in exchange—the fall in value of the rupee. But in the last six years, 1889 to 1894, there have been four years of surplus, amounting to Rx.6,805,000, and two years of deficit, amounting to Rx.2,626,000, leaving a net surplus of Rx.4,179,000. In 1884 Mr. Cross informed the House that India in the previous 30 years had absorbed a very large amount of silver and gold. £220,000,000 of silver and £110,000,000 of gold, making a total of £330,000,000. I have no means of verifying the figures, but I am sure Mr. Cross would not have made the statement except on good authority. During the 13 years India has imported a large amount of gold and silver which remains unaccounted for, and which, therefore, is in India now. The net balance unaccounted for is £191,000,000, of which £51,000,000 is of gold. I think that is a fair argument to use when the poverty of India is spoken of. Then, as to wages, though a great deal of them are paid in kind, of course a large amount of money passes, and there has been a considerable improvement. One of the most competent officials of our Indian Government—the gentleman at the head of our Statistical Department—has taken out from a number of large towns and localities the fair average type of wages of the agricultural labourer, mason, carpenter, blacksmith, and other craftsmen—and I am now talking about money wages. The wages of the agricultural labourer have risen between 1873 and 1892 by 9 per cent., and the rise in the wages of artisans has been 16 2-3 per cent. So that, so far as that goes, we are on the right side. Now, as to the Revenue, I think the figures are very instructive. Whereas in England the taxation is £2 11s. 8d. per head, in Scotland £2 8s. 1d. per head, and in Ireland £1 12s. 5d. per head, the Budget which I shall present to-morrow will show that the taxation per head in India is something like 2s. 6d., or 1-20th the taxation of the United Kingdom and 1-13th of that of Ireland.

Mr. S. SMITH: Does he exclude the Land Revenue?

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Yes. So far as the taxation of India is concerned, taking the rupee at 1s. 1d., it is 2s. 6d. per head. So much for what I may call a general view of the progress of the people in India. Now let me say a word or two on some of the points which have been specially referred to. My hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire referred to some of the grievances of the people. He complains, first, that the Government is too expensive, the scale being a European one, and that the salaries are too high. He put forward the statement that if the salaries were reduced to proper Indian proportions a great saving might be effected. But the natives of India are paid according to this scale, and natives amongst the *employés* of the Government are in an overwhelming majority. Let me give a few figures. In Bengal a native High Court Judge receives Rx.5,000 a year. The salaries of the native subordinate Judges range from Rx.720 to Rx.1,200, and the lower Judges receive from Rx.300 to Rx.480. In the Provincial Service the salaries range from Rx.960 to Rx.2,400. The salaries of the higher grade in the Civil Service are not very dissimilar to those paid here, and contrast very favourably with the salaries paid in foreign European countries. I admit the salaries are on a high scale, and that is a question which some day may have to be considered. No doubt the exile from England when the salaries were originally fixed was more complete than it is now, but it must be remembered that at that time the rupee was worth 2s., and the sum received nowadays does not by any means represent what it did formerly. That, of course, is a matter of detail. I am not going to commit myself to any view as to the scale of our expenditure. What I am saying now is to show the House that there has been no increase to the disadvantage of the people of India in this respect. Objection has also been taken by my hon. Friend to the pension list. I take exception to the pension list in Great Britain, and it is increasing here as rapidly as in India. I think 3d. in the £1 on the Income Tax is required in this country in order to pay pensions, and so long as the system of pensions continues we shall have to provide for them. Pensions are a never decreasing charge; whether in England or in India you will find the pension list increasing. My hon. Friend made some severe remarks about the squeezing of the land assessment. He complained bitterly especially of the temporary settlement, and very strongly advocated what he called perpetuity of tenure at a fixed rent. Well, the land assessments are not increased in the manner stated by the hon. Gentleman. The instructions of the Government of India are clear. The only grounds on which the land assessment is increased are the increase of area under cultivation, rises in price of agricultural produce, and increase in produce, owing directly or indirectly to the action of the Government—to the improvements effected at the expense of the State. These are the only grounds on which the assessment can be increased; and improvements effected by the cultivators or the landlords themselves, whether from their own funds or by means of State loans, and whether arising from improved methods of tillage or otherwise, are exempt from assessment in most parts of India. Irish tenants would be glad to find that their rents were not raised on those grounds in Ireland. To-morrow I shall submit a statement as to the land of India. Now, in passing, I can only express my regret that my hon. Friend thought it right to charge the officials of the Land Revenue with bribery and corruption.

Mr. S. SMITH said, he referred to the native agents employed by the Land Office. He was not referring in the least to Europeans. He believed that a great deal of bribery prevailed amongst the inferior native agents.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I am glad my hon. Friend has made that statement, and that he has modified what he said. But even as the hon. Member has modified it the charge is a serious one—that of bribery and corruption. The people of India do not understand all the ins and outs of our Parliamentary customs. What my hon. Friend has just stated is hardly a sufficient reason for a statement which will go out to India with the authority of one of the most universally-respected Members of this House. I ask him to do one of two things—either to give me some case where this offence has been committed, and I promise him it shall be dealt with promptly, vigorously, and severely; or, if not, that he will feel it due to a large class of Civil servants to withdraw so grave a charge. The speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Finsbury (Mr. Naoroji) has been fully replied to by the hon. Baronet the Member for Kingston, but there was one point in which he was supported, to my intense astonishment, by my hon. Friend behind me—namely, with reference to the excess of exports over imports. They seemed to think that excess of exports over imports was a proof of the poverty of India. Why, Sir, India must have an excess of exports if it is to pay its way. A large part of it represents interest on debt which has been incurred for the benefit of India. That must be paid for by exports. India has to pay a large portion of the cost of government in England—and I consider she receives money's worth from the English Government—and therefore India must have a surplus of exports. In addition to that, a very large amount of English capital has been invested in India. If that were not the case, I doubt if the great manufactories that are now in India for the manufacture of cotton, jute, and indigo would exist there at all. The profits on that capital must be remitted to England, and therefore there must be an excess of exports over imports if India is to pay her way. I have already called attention to the enormous accumulation of treasure as against that. The hon. Member for Finsbury seemed to think that the one thing desirable was that a native Administration should take the place of the British Administration. He was very enthusiastic about it, and so eloquent that he puzzled me very much, because he first of all said that India could not bear a further burden of taxation imposed on it; and then he said, "If you will allow us to prosper we will pay three or four times our present revenue." He argued that a different system of government would increase enormously the paying power of India. Now on this subject I have had laid before me a very instructive comparison—so instructive that I must ask the House to attend to it. The argument is that the administration of India by England is costly and intolerable, and that native administration would be economical and popular. We have in the south-west of India one of the most influential and prosperous of the native States, the State of Mysore, which was handed over to native rule I think in 1881. It is surrounded by Madras. The conditions of life in the two districts are practically the same. The population of Mysore is 5,000,000; in Madras it is 35,000,000, or seven times more. Mysore, moreover, is administered by an able and business-like Representative Body. Now, Mysore taxation falls on the population at the rate, including the land revenues, of three rupees per head. In Madras it is two rupees and four annas. Taking the items, I find that in the 11 years ending 1892-93 the growth of taxation has been in Mysore from 101 to 153 lakhs, or 52 per cent.; in Madras it has been from 735 to 884 lakhs, or 21 per cent. I can go through various items of revenue and give the House the most interesting figures showing the progress—I think the wise progress—of this State which is availing itself of a great many of the modern improvements which are prevalent in the adjoining country of Madras, and I find in every point there is an increase in expenditure. That, I think, is a very good illustration of, I will not say extravagance, for I do not wish to imply that against Mysore, but of the fact that if you are to govern India wisely and successfully the cost of government will necessarily increase. The handing over of the financial administration of India—whether it be wise on other grounds or not I will not say—at any rate from a financial point of view would not be in any sense a greater economy. Now I ought to say a word or two with regard to another subject. There has been a long Debate on the subject of the simultaneous examinations, and I will only say, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for South Edinburgh, who complained of the unconstitutional action of the Government in this matter, that the action we took was with a full sense of our responsibility alike to Parliament, to the country, and to India. The hon. Member very *naively* admitted that if our action had been challenged on a second Division the first decision would probably have been reversed. On that I will express no opinion, but I want the House distinctly to understand the grounds on which the Government proceeded in their action. I want my hon. Friend to understand that in so serious a matter as, I will not say the refusal of the Executive Government to accept a Resolution, but suspending action upon a Resolution of the House, and, therefore, taking the risk that the House would deal severely with it by ejecting it from Office if it disapproved of its action, we were not acting on the advice of the Government of India; we were not acting on the mere opinion of one individual Minister. Our decision was arrived at by a unanimous Cabinet, after full and careful consideration of all the circumstances of the case, and with a full belief, on our part, that no other decision was open to us than the one at which we arrived. We did not decide the matter on the ground the hon. Member seems to think of depriving India of the advantages of competition; in our judgment competition is not the best means of selecting natives to the highest-ranked places. It may be necessary in Europe in order to check nepotism, but in India nepotism is impossible. Probation by actual employment forms a competitive examination of the best kind, and on that ground I am prepared to join issue with my hon. Friend. I am not a great admirer of competitive examination itself. We thought that to apply competitive examinations to India in which a certain class of learning was necessary, which was accessible only to a limited section of the population, and to which some of the ruling sections were indifferent, would have been an act of great folly on the part of the Government. One test—and the best test always for promotion in India—will be successful administration, character, competence, and proved ability. My hon. Friend said, "Are you of opinion that a certain number of the Civil servants should be not natives, but Europeans?" and we say, "Yes, we are." In order to insure the efficient government of India a minimum of European officials is, in our judgment, indispensable. It would be entirely out of the question to reduce the existing minimum of Europeans at the present time, as the number of them is at present exceedingly small. Deducting 93 posts assigned to the Provincial Service, the cadre of posts at present reserved for covenanted and military officers numbers 731. These are the officers upon whose administrative capacity depended the quiet and orderly government of 217,000,000 of people. They represent the British Government in India. They represent the British Government in the eyes of the people. It is to their personal influence, their impartiality, justice, efficiency, and moral fitness that that department of the administration of the Empire is entrusted. I have already told the House that there are thousands of appointments in India which are held by natives. There are a certain class of appointments to which no Government in India can appoint a man who is not a native without reporting the matter to the Central Government and obtaining their consent to such appointment. We think the present number of Europeans in the Indian Service small and necessary. My hon. Friend alluded to the able note of Sir D. Fitzpatrick, whose opinion — and he is a man of great Indian knowledge —came to this, that with the contending races and faiths, with the different climates and different conditions of life in the various parts of India, we could not put the government of one Province into the hands of the representatives of another Province —in other words, that we could not ask the martial races of India or the Mahommedans of India to submit to the rule of the inhabitants of Bengal, and *vice versâ*. Upon all these considerations we arrived most reluctantly—for no Government would wish to come into conflict with the House of Commons on a question of this kind—and simply from a sense of public duty, at the conclusion that has been criticised to-day. And now my time has gone. I cannot deal with a great many points I should have liked to deal with in reference to this Debate. What is the course which we are to take upon the Resolution before the House? The Resolution commences—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry should take place into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing financial burdens."

What is "a full and independent Parliamentary inquiry"? I thought all Parliamentary inquiries were independent. I suppose my hon. Friend means impartial. "A full and independent" inquiry! I do not know whether he means to restrict the class of Members to be put on the Committee. The Resolution says the Committee is to inquire—

> "into the condition and wants of the Indian people, and their ability to bear their existing burdens, the nature of the Revenue system and the possibility of reductions in the expenditure; also the financial relations between India and the United Kingdom, and generally the system of Government in India."

Well, Sir, that is a proposal of a very wide character. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said last year that he was not prepared to refer the British Constitution to a Select Committee, and I am sure the

House would not sanction referring the constitution of the Government of India to a Select Committee. An inquiry of this sort must be most protracted and costly, and I think the results would be most unsatisfactory, because, after all, any question relating to what I may call the Imperial policy with reference to India must be a question for the responsible Government of the day. No Government of the day would shirk that responsibility, no Government of the day would allow any Committee to undertake that responsibility for it, and I am sure no House of Commons would allow any Government to shelter itself behind the Report of a Committee in dealing with such a question. My hon. Friend quotes the precedent of the East India Company, but that Company was a trustee who came to Parliament once in 20 years for a renewal of the trust, and therefore Parliament was entitled to ask how the Company had discharged its duty. But we are not living under that state of things. We are living under the Government of the Imperial Parliament, by a Minister who is responsible to and controlled by this House. With reference to these Committees, there have been several appointed already. Mr. Fawcett's Committee was appointed in 1871. It sat for three years, and the only practical recommendation which it made was that the Indian Budget should be presented early in the Session. That has not been realised. In the new Parliament of 1874 the scope of the inquiry was limited, and a Report was presented which amounted to nothing. Lord Northbrook's Commission sat for 14 years before it made its final Report. Therefore the precedent of these Committees and Commissions is not encouraging. The people of England understand exactly what is meant by a Select Committee and a Royal Commission, and what the limits of their authority are. But if you were to appoint a Committee to overhaul the Government of India you would produce a serious effect. You would create an impression that the Government of India was upon its trial and would weaken its moral force. One or two gentlemen have complained with reference to the financial arrangements which now exist between the War Office, the Treasury, and the India Office. The hon. Member for Oxford said there is a good deal to be said on both sides. I know there is. The Chancellor of the Exchequer would have a word or two to say on the other side, but I at once frankly admit that I think it is desirable that the financial expenditure of a great country like India should be subjected to the criticism of the House of Commons more in detail than is possible in the annual Budget. I think that, upon the whole, it would be wise from time to time to have an inquiry as to how the Revenues of India are spent—spent in England as well as in India. No inquiry of that kind would be entirely futile if you could compress it within reasonable limits. If you made it wide and extensive the whole thing would break down. What I would suggest to my hon. Friend—as his motive and that of the Government are the same—namely, to bring about a more efficient and economical administration in India, and to let the people in India know that for every sovereign spent they get 20s. value—what I would suggest would be that he should withdraw his Motion, and I will undertake on the part of the Government that at the very commencement of next Session we will propose the appointment of a Select Committee, which will inquire into the financial expenditure of the Indian Revenues, both in England and in India. I think that would be giving to the House what would be of some service to it, and would obviate some of the difficulties which have been raised. It would, I think, clear up some of the charges of extravagance which have been made against the Government of India, and, on the whole, would be conducive to the public good. In thanking the House for the patience with which they have listened to me I can assure them that my desire is to carry out the policy adopted by both sides and to administer India as efficiently and as impartially as possible. My hon. Friend the Member for Banffshire is mistaken in saying that the Secretary of State is simply a tool in the hands of the Indian Council. I can assure him that the Secretary of State exercises an independent judgment on all Indian affairs, and that he is as much entitled to Parliamentary confidence on that point as any other Minister of the Crown.

*MR. SEYMOUR KEAY asked whether the Reference would include the question of "financial administration"?

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, he did not quite understand what the hon. Member meant. He did not propose to make a Motion to-day, but at the commencement of next Session. It would be open to any Member, when the Motion for the appointment of the Committee was made, to submit any Amendment he thought necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member for Flintshire withdraw?

MR. S. SMITH said, that he and his friends who were supporters of the Motion would accept with a certain degree of satisfaction the offer of the right hon. Gentleman. They thanked him for having to some extent met their desires. But they did not think the inquiry would be adequate or complete unless it enabled them in some way to deal with the tax-paying power of the people of India. They therefore held themselves free to ask for such an extension of the Reference as would enable them to bring in that question.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee).

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 340.)

COMMITTEE.

Bill considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) moved to leave out the words "or neglects," as objectionable.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the words "or neglects."—(*Mr. Tomlinson*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) said, he had had some communication on the subject with the hon. Gentleman who represented the mine-owners, and the objection to these words seemed to him altogether unaccountable, but he would like to have the opportunity of further considering the matter, and would deal with the Amendment on Report if the hon. Member would postpone it for the present. It seemed a pity for the sake of a merely verbal change to alter the form of the clause, and he hoped the hon. Member would consent to postpone the Amendment.

MR. TOMLINSON consented.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 2.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid) moved that the clause be omitted as unnecessary.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the clause.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. ASQUITH assented to the Amendment.

Question put, and negatived.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2.) (BRIDGWATER, &c., CANALS) BILL. (No. 198.)

Lords Amendments agreed to.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.—(No. 10.)

Order for Committee read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.
(No. 156.)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed [14th August] on Consideration of the Bill, as amended.

And which Amendment was, in page 2, line 1, after the word "force," to insert the words—

"or if that rate or charge is higher than the rate or charge in force on the last day of December one thousand eight hundred and ninety-two, then such sum as would have been payable on the footing of the last-mentioned rate or charge."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

JURIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 350.)

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; Bill read the third time, and passed.

PLUMBERS' REGISTRATION BILL.
(No. 84.)

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [12th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time," read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS.)

Leave given to the Select Committee to report their Observations to the House.

Report, with Observations, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 297.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (GOVERNMENT BUSINESS,)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I desire to give notice that to-morrow I will move, as is usual when the legislative business of the Session has practically reached an end, the following Resolution:—

"That, for the remainder of the Session, Government Business be not interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House; and may be entered upon at any hour, though past 12 o'clock; but that as soon as Government Business be disposed of Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."

COLONEL NOLAN asked whether that would apply to the Coercion Act? He hoped that an exception would be made in favour of the Bill for the Repeal of the Crimes Act.

SIR W. HARCOURT was afraid that no Bills whatever could be spared. The Rule must be inflexible.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, he had no objection to the Motion. On the contrary, he approved of it. But he hoped the House would not be asked to sit at undue length, and that if an important Vote came on at 12 o'clock the Government would not insist upon its being discussed, but would go on to less controversial Votes until the House thought the time for adjournment had arrived.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, that he was desirous of consulting the wishes of hon. Members on the other side of the House.

SIR R. TEMPLE asked whether a Saturday Sitting would take place.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, he ought to have mentioned that it was the intention of the Government to endeavour to make progress with Supply on Saturday, in order that the House might adjourn in the course of next week.

SIR R. TEMPLE asked whether the Saturday Sitting would be regulated by the Wednesday Rule?

SIR W. HARCOURT said, it would be an ordinary Sitting.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that he should not object to that proposal, if the Government did not attempt to make the Saturday Sitting prolonged.

SIR W. HARCOURT: Oh, no.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked whether the automatic adjournment would apply before as well as after 12 o'clock? If Government business were concluded before midnight private Members ought to have the chance of utilising the time.

SIR W. HARCOURT said, that he would consider the question, but he had not contemplated Supply being concluded before midnight.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR pointed out that the House was not fit to discuss Private Bills at this stage of the Session, and he hoped therefore on that account that the proposed concession would not be made.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 16th August 1894.

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL. (No. 208.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): My Lords, this Bill which I ask your Lordships to read a second time has been very carefully considered in the other House. Your Lordships will be aware that attention has recently been called to the very disastrous effects which has been produced owing to the failure of certain Building Societies, resulting in the loss by many of the working classes of this country of the product of many years of thrift. Although the measure has no doubt attracted public attention owing to the recent failures, and although I think it certain that those failures have facilitated the passage of the Bill through the other House by exciting a natural interest in the subject and a desire to see an amendment of the law, yet it does not represent anything that could be called panic legislation, inasmuch as the expediency of legislation in this direction has long been in view, and the provisions which are substantially embodied in this Bill have been long under consideration. The Bill does not propose to interfere with the management of their affairs by the Societies themselves. To attempt this would no doubt be a fatal policy; but it deals with what will probably prevent some of the disasters which we have recently seen. Hitherto, although accounts have been presented to the members and Registrar from time to time, yet on matters most material they have conveyed little or no information. Large sums have often been advanced on mortgage, and owing to the non-payment of interest the Society has entered into the possession of many of those mortgaged properties without any information on the subject being conveyed to the members, and without their knowing anything of what was going on. The extent to which this practice has prevailed will be apparent when I tell your Lordships what is shown by a Return which has been moved for of the value of the properties which have come into the possession of Societies owing to the non-fulfilment of obligations by mortgagors. The Societies are not under any statutory compulsion to make a Return. Two hundred and twenty Societies having £13,000,000 out on mortgage do not make any Return, but 716 Societies which have £28,000,000 on mortgage made Returns showing that they were in possession of properties themselves which had been mortgaged for no less than £7,315,000. No doubt those Societies which made Returns had in their possession mortgages in similar proportion, and this would mean that nearly 1,000 Societies have probably about £5,000,000 of mortgaged property which they have had to take into their own possession owing to the non-fulfilment of obligations. The Bill proposes to require that the Societies should show in their annual accounts what amounts are out on mortgage, not, of course, specifying the particular properties or the names of the mortgagees, but indicating what amounts have been advanced on individual properties, and on how many properties those advances have been made. The original object of these Building Societies was to encourage thrift by enabling advances to be made by means of which working men should become the owners of their own dwellings. But, unfortunately, many of these Societies have departed from the original purpose of their foundation, and they have become lending Societies in connection sometimes with speculating builders on extremely insufficient security. That is the first and probably the most vital provision of the Bill. In addition to this, power is given to 10 members of a Society to call upon the Registrar of Building Societies for the appointment of a person to examine the accounts and report upon them, and one-tenth of the members of a Society may at any time require the appointment of an Inspector, who may examine into the management and proceedings of the Society and the manner in which the Society is carried on. There are also provisions for auditing the accounts of the Society. I do not think I need trouble your Lordships

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

in more detail with the measure. I am sure your Lordships will sympathise with its object. It will not fetter the conduct by the Societies of their own business, while on the other hand it will afford to their members such information as will be likely to induce an amount of care and caution in the management of Societies which has not hitherto always been shown, and it will protect their Members from such losses as those from which unfortunately in the past they have suffered.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Lord ASHBOURNE: My Lords, I entirely concur with the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack upon the propriety of reading this Bill a second time, and of giving it every assistance to enable it to be passed into law without delay. It deals with important matters which have attracted much public attention, and is likely to prevent the repetition of grave abuses. I have been written to in reference to this Bill by a firm of solicitors in whose judgment I place confidence and for whose respectability I can vouch, suggesting some Amendments; but I am bound to say as at present advised, having read the clauses in this Bill, I do not see the exact relevance of the suggestions made, and I have asked for further information. I do not, however, suggest that the noble and learned Lord should change the day he has fixed for the Committee stage on that account, and unless my mind goes with the Amendments I will not trouble your Lordships with them.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said, he also had received communications from Scotland in regard to this Bill, one being from a gentleman whom he could trust in reference to one of the clauses as interfering with members of these Societies obtaining small amounts free of Stamp Duty. That privilege was reserved by some Societies, but would not, owing to the peculiar form of the drafting, be given to others. He would be glad to know from the noble and learned Lord whether he would accept an Amendment which would meet the difficulty?

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): The noble Lord has been good enough to communicate with me on this matter. Two points are mentioned: one that the Society referred to would be unable in future to make temporary advances to non-advanced members in respect of subscriptions standing to their credit. This Bill will make no difference, and whatever power existed before will remain after the Bill is passed. The other point is one of some substance. The Society referred to is at present registered under the Act of 1836, and the Stamp Duty for transactions under £500 is small. No doubt that exception is of some value. If the Society were allowed to register as proposed by the Bill under the Act of 1874, it would undoubtedly lose that exception. On the other hand, it would gain the advantage that, whereas the liability is unlimited under the Act of 1836, it would become limited under the Act of 1874, so that if they lost in one direction they would obtain the benefit in the other. If the Society desires to obtain the advantage of that exception, I do not think it is unreasonable that their wish should be complied with, inasmuch as that has been done in the case of certain Societies registered before 1855. I understand that the Society to which the noble Lord refers was registered in the following year, and if he desires to amend the Bill by substituting for the date 1855, that of 1856 or 1857, to meet the case, I should not feel inclined to resist the Amendment in that form.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 207)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY and LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (The Earl of Rosebery): My Lords, I do not think that this Bill, which is not long in itself, although it involves some important points of principle and detail, will need a very lengthy explanation from me, for this simple reason—that it comes up to this House with the practically unanimous concurrence of all parties in the House of Commons. The Second and Third

Readings were passed unanimously, and there were only two Divisions taken in Committee. Therefore, I am entitled to claim that it comes up to this House with a rare consensus of opinion from the other House of Parliament. Moreover, it represents the outcome of a very strong general feeling that there should be some assistance given from the richer parishes in the Metropolis to the needs of the poorer parishes. And here again I do not think I shall strike any note which is objectionable to the noble Lords opposite, because, as a matter of fact, all the steps which have been taken in this direction have been taken by Ministers who were Members of the late Cabinet. The first step was taken in 1867 by the constitution of a Common Poor Fund, under the auspices of Lord Cranbrook. The next step was taken in 1870 by Mr. Goschen, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he introduced a Bill giving a general contribution of 3d. a day for all indoor paupers of the Metropolis; the third step was taken by Mr. Ritchie in the Local Government Bill of 1888, when he allowed a portion of the Probate Duty Grant from Imperial sources to the purposes of the London County Council. I think, therefore, that the general principle of this Bill is not likely to meet with any opposition from your Lordships. The general principle involved is nothing more or less than this—namely, that we should endeavour by some measure of this kind to reduce the rating inequalities of the Metropolis, which are, as is known to your Lordships, sufficiently glaring, and which I will not trouble the House on this occasion by illustrating in detail. How does the Bill propose to redress these inequalities? It proposes to do so by levying a general rate of 6d. in the £1 all over the Metropolis, which is to be handed over to the various parishes in proportion to the extent of their respective populations. I think there is no practical objection to the basis of population being taken, although some have thought that it was too rough-and-ready a method of ascertaining the wants of a parish. But, as a matter of fact, after a great deal of threshing out in Committee in the House of Commons, I think it has been ascertained that population is the only practical basis upon which this assistance can be given. There are two other bases which have a certain plausibility about them which have been urged by various sections of opinion; one is, that the contribution in aid should be given in proportion to the sanitary expenditure of the various parishes. Well, I think it is clear that any such provision would tend at once to local extravagance, and would tend therefore to defeat the very object which we have in view. The other principle that has been suggested is this—that a uniform rate should be raised all over the Metropolis and applied generally by uniform management. But uniform management means central management, and there is a great difference between even great towns like Birmingham and Manchester, for instance, and such a vast city as this Metropolis. So long as a diversity exists in our municipal administration, I think that uniform management for this purpose would lead to nothing but mismanagement and extravagance. The area of London is too great for it to be treated in that manner, and therefore I think we come, by a process of exhaustion, to the remedy proposed by this Bill. As a matter of fact, the remedy proposed by this Bill will work fairly enough in practice. All the most wealthy and lightly-rated parishes will pay, and all the poorest and most heavily-rated parishes will receive. But the average rate of parishes receiving will remain above the average rate of the Metropolis, and the average rate of those parishes which will contribute will remain below the average rate of the Metropolis all the same. The average rate in the contributing parishes for the two years ending last year was 5s. 1·3d. in the £1. This will be increased by the Bill on the present calculations to 5s. 4·7d. The average rate for the same period of the receiving parishes was 6s. 3d., and under the Bill it will be reduced to 6s. I will only trouble you with one more figure showing the general fairness and justice of the new arrangement. At present the difference between the average rates of the parishes that will contribute and receive is 1s. 1·7d. in the £1; but by the new system that difference will be reduced to 7d., and I believe that you may draw a hard-and-fast line, and say that in all the parishes in which the rateable value per head of population is above £7 18s. those parishes will contribute, and where the average rate is below that figure those parishes will receive. I have no hesitation in saying, therefore, again, that from the best calculations we can make we believe that the general arrangement under the Bill will work out an extremely fair one. Now the mechanism is this : the levying of the rate will be left to the London County Council. Each year they will fix a general rate all over London and determine the contribution of each parish on the valuation lists, and that rate will be apportioned according to population to the various sanitary districts. Of course, my Lords, it will be in the main a sort of Clearing House arrangement of accounts : those parishes where the rating is above receiving the balance which the other parishes will have to pay. In order to make this apportionment as accurate as possible we have determined not to wait for the next Decennial Census, but have provided for a Census being taken in March, 1896 ; and by implication it will follow that the next Census, which I suppose will be taken in 1901, will apply as a Quinquennial Census with regard to value for the purpose of this Bill. Now I come to the other part of the Bill which provides for the application of this fund, which of course in one sense is scarcely a less important matter than the relief of the poorer parishes. The first application will be to sanitation. I think no one can doubt that the proper sanitation of the whole of London affects all the inhabitants of this great city to an equal degree. Infection may come from one of the poorer districts and spread over the wealthier districts, and therefore they have all one common sanitary interest. I hope that in many of the districts the sanitary necessities are already sufficiently provided for. The next application of the grant will be to paving and the question of lighting. Everybody knows that the roads in the poorer districts are not so well kept up as those in other districts, and that they are kept up at much greater expense. Then as to lighting, anyone who penetrates the regions particularly in the East End of London knows that the darkness is due to the inadequacy of the funds for the purpose of lighting. The darkness of the streets was mentioned by the police in connection with the Whitechapel murders as a source of actual danger to life in the Metropolis. It may be, however, that in some of the districts which are to receive, all those proposals are already sufficiently provided for. This Bill will come to the relief of these districts, and I shall be glad to see that the proposed reductions are carried out without any sacrifice of efficiency. I think when we compare the roads in some of the parishes with those in the parish, for instance, in which I live, we must admit that there is a margin for considerable reduction and consequent relief to the poorer ratepayers. With regard to sanitary efficiency, I may mention that the Bill also gives power to the Local Government Board to act when the application of the grant is not properly carried out. That is a power which, in the opinion of the Department most interested, it may never be necessary to apply, but it is one which is necessary in such a Bill. I shall not further delay your Lordships, as various Bills have to come before you ; but I do recommend the Bill to both political Parties on the ground of its being a boon to those in this great Metropolis, in whom both sides have of late taken so much interest. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Rosebery.*)

*LORD MONK BRETTON hoped the Bill would not go forth to the world with a blemish on the face of it. It was called a Bill for the equalisation of rates, but did not equalise them. It hardly even answered to the Preamble that it "aided in the equalisation of rates." Many inequalities and anomalies would still be left, and others would be created, though it did rough justice, as it took from the richer in aid of the poorer districts. Some years ago he had had to consider carefully what was the best broad and general basis for the distribution of grants in aid, and he arrived at the conclusion that no better basis than population could be adopted, because that insured aid being given where needs and poverty were presumably largest. The reduction of rates had been mentioned as one object of the Bill, but it was not a desirable one. The rates in the poorer districts of the Metropolis were largely, and in some cases almost entirely, paid by compounding house-owners. On the other hand, the contributions to those poorer districts would be levied not so much upon owners as upon tenants in the West End. A sufficient answer to that was that the occupiers of houses in those wealthier districts were, as a class, more affluent than occupiers in the East, North, and South of the Metropolis. The weak point in the Bill, however, seemed to be that the grants in aid might inure in the poorer parishes to the benefit of the compounding house-owners, and not of the poor tenants, the people who it was desired, in the main, should reap the benefit. If the Local Authorities acted in the spirit of the Bill they would raise the same amount of rates, as at present, and make the same expenditure upon sanitation, lighting, and paving, and then devote the grant in addition for the latter purposes only. By doing so, they would benefit the poorer tenants as well as the whole community. If, on the other hand, they reduced their rates by the amount of the grants, and only spent the same total sum as now upon works, improvements, and sanitation, they would simply be putting a bonus in the pockets of the compound house-owners. Which purpose would the grants be devoted to? If they were divided and applied for both purposes they would be frittered away. Happily, in the latter stages of the Bill in the other House Amendments were inserted defining the purposes to which the grants were to be devoted and the order of their application; and, further, that the Local Authorities should render detailed accounts annually to the Local Government Board of their total expenditure and of the grants separately, power being given to the Local Government Board to order payment of the grants to be withheld by the London County Council from defaulting Local Authorities. That showed the intention that the grants should be applied for sanitary purposes rather than in reduction of the rates. While approving of the Bill he was afraid that its title would lead to disappointment in the poorer districts, where it would be expected that a great deal more was going to be done for them, while the whole fund distributed would only amount to about £220,000 a year.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It would perhaps be hardly courteous to the noble Lord the Prime Minister if some voice did not proceed from these Benches in respect to the Bill of which he has moved the Second Reading. My own opinion with regard to this Bill is that it does rough justice indeed, but that it is justice on the whole, and I myself shall vote in favour of its passing. The noble Lord who has just sat down has, I think, established the fact that the Bill compelled contributions by the tenants of the West End to the landlords of the East End. I am not a landowner in the East End. I respect them very much, and I am very glad they are to get relief; but whether this will benefit the poor people in the East End I have very great doubt. Again, although I am thoroughly content to accept the Bill, I do not accept the arguments used by the noble Earl in moving the Second Reading. He seemed to me to accept the essential unity of all that is included in the Metropolitan area—that it is not only a constitutional arrangement, but one in actual fact. Now, I doubt very much whether there is any great unity of interest in respect of matters for parochial expenditure between Hammersmith and Mile End or between Paddington and Clapham, which are all deeply interested in many of the subjects for the expenditure authorised under this Bill. It is a constitutional fiction such as we are constantly obliged to employ, that the various parts of the Metropolis are equally interested in the parochial affairs of all or any of them. It is a constitutional fiction to which we must adhere, because it is convenient, and on the whole, as I say, rough justice is done. There is another reason why to myself personally—I wish to include no one else—this particular kind of legislation is grateful. I believe it has a tendency in the direction of a very much larger measure to which, I think, we shall ultimately come. It has a tendency in favour of general centralisation and getting rid of the local levying of rates. In past times the local levying of rates was an exceedingly wise measure, because it tended greatly to economy and did not inflict any particular injustice. But the economy has been growing less and the injustice greater, and I doubt very much whether the time has not come—if it has not come now it will speedily come—when the injustice inflicted by the local system, of which the main effect is to throw the expenditure in which all are interested upon one particular and comparatively small class of property, must be regarded as greater than the convenience resulting from the economy of localisation. I will not undertake to say, and I am far from pledging myself to the opinion, that the time has come when any particular measure ought to be introduced in order to carry these views into effect, for I am fully alive to the difficulties which are involved; but I rather look upon it as a counsel of perfection, to which we ought to adhere, that we ought to work towards that centralisation of expenditure and of taxation of which one of the main effects must be to relieve the particular class of property on which all this expenditure is now most unjustly thrown. The Bill, therefore, tends in a direction with which I sympathise, but I again say that I by no means foresee in the immediate or reasonable future the possibility of giving effect to those views. I believe the tendency of events is in their favour, and that localisation both of expenditure and of levy must gradually diminish both in popularity and availability. When we shall come to such remedy I do not know; but I think in the meantime this is a step, and a safe step, in that direction, and for that reason, as well as for other reasons, I am myself glad that it has been brought before Parliament.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I have only to say one word with reference to what fell from the noble Lord below the Gangway. His reference to the compounding landlord had some atom of truth in it, but I think the noble Marquess in referring to it pressed the point rather further than the case warranted when he said it was contribution by the tenants of the West End to the landlords of the East End, though doubtless the temptation to the epigram was irresistible. At the same time, it must be understood that this is in its essence a rough-and-ready attempt to redress inequalities of rating, and it is as such that the Government presents it. If we were to go into the details of the matter, we should be confronted with innumerable difficulties and anomalies, and it would take a much larger Bill to redress them. I must also protest against the objection taken by the noble Lord below the Gangway to the title of the Bill. "Equalisation of Rates" is the short title of the Bill on the outside, but the full title set out in the body of the measure—namely, "a Bill to make better provision for the equalisation of rates in different parts of London"—is, I submit, an accurate and candid account of the Bill. If the noble Lord chooses for the purposes of his argument to take the short title put on the back of the Bill, that is one thing; but it is not the title of the Bill.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL.

(No. 209.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

*LORD HAWKESBURY said, this was a very short Bill. Its object was simply to determine a question which had arisen upon a section of the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890. That Act authorised the replacing of the dwellings of persons whose homes had been found to be in an insanitary condition, and the Local Government Board was empowered to direct the Local Authority to carry out its provisions. A question had arisen with regard to the bororwing powers in reference to larger and smaller areas. The Local Government Board had always considered that the necessary power of borrowing was given in the smaller, as it undoubtedly was in the larger areas, and had made orders accordingly. As, however, the point had been raised, it was thought desirable to bring in this Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Lord Hawkesbury.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.—(No. 204.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR: My Lords, although this is probably the largest Bill ever brought before you, I need detain you but a moment in moving the Second Reading. It is a Bill for consolidating all the legislation on the subject. The matter was referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses, and was partly proceeded with last Session. The Bill was again brought in this Session, and referred to a Joint Committee, which sat for many days and thoroughly examined all its provisions assisted by representatives of all parties interested in them. In the result a measure has been produced which is likely to give very general satisfaction. I have only to say that a communication was made to me yesterday in which certain persons complained that the Bill had been passed hurriedly through Parliament. I can give an assurance that no Bill was ever more carefully considered. They call attention to two points in which they consider the law has been changed to their disadvantage. I have looked into the matter, and can assure them that they are entirely mistaken; the Bill simply reproduces the existing enactments and makes no alteration that could be to their disadvantage. I trust this explanation may remove any apprehensions that may have been entertained, and I beg to move the Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

UNIFORMS BILL.—(No. 175.)

THIRD READING.

Bill read 3ª (according to Order).

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH moved an Amendment to include music-halls in regard to uniforms worn in public performances.

Amendment moved, in Clause 2, line 21, sub-section (b), after ("a") to insert ("music-hall or").

Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

CROWN LANDS BILL.—(No. 199.)

THIRD READING.

The Queen's consent signified; Bill read 3ª (according to Order).

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Herschell): I have to move a merely verbal Amendment. When this Bill was first introduced there was a somewhat lengthy Schedule containing a number of Acts which it was proposed should be repealed. Those have now disappeared, except two which come sufficiently under a section of the Act. I move, therefore, an Amendment to leave out Clause 14 and the Schedule, which is now entirely useless.

Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 210.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clauses 1 to 3 agreed to.

Clause 4.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN moved to omit Sub-section 4 of the clause, providing that

> "the Board shall comply with any instructions which may be issued by the Secretary for Scotland."

He took objection to this on the ground that it gave an undue and unnecessary power to the Secretary for Scotland. The danger of enacting such a provision as this was that it would encourage persons to put pressure upon the Secretary for Scotland to decide questions connected with particular cases of administration in their favour.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Sub-section 4.—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

*The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, that if the sub-section remained in the Bill the Secretary for Scotland would be in a very anomalous position. He might find himself in a minority of one on the Board in Edinburgh, and yet on returning to his office in London might overthrow their decision by a stroke of his pen.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he was quite ready to accept the Amendment. He believed the words were surplusage, and had probably been put in by a too ardent admirer of the Secretary for Scotland.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5 agreed to, with verbal Amendment.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, in moving an Amendment, that it was thought when this clause was first drafted there were no legal proceedings outstanding in which the Board of Supervision were concerned. It had been found that was not the case, and words were necessary to avoid difficulty.

Amendment moved, in page 3, line 20, after ("executed") insert ("or of any action or proceeding raised.")—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 8, 9, and 10 agreed to.

Clause 11.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved an Amendment in this clause, which enacted that a woman otherwise possessing the qualification for being registered on any County Council or Municipal Register of electors, should not be disqualified by marriage from being registered, provided that a husband and wife should not both be registered in respect of the same property. He proposed to amend the clause by substituting "qualification" for "property." The Bill would then, he said, be an enfranchising instead of a disfranchising measure, though he did not think this clause would greatly increase the electoral roll. There was no reason why two persons, either as owner or tenant, should not be upon the Register. Unless this Amendment were accepted they would run the risk of disfranchising persons unable to subdivide their property and enfranchise those who could do so.

The Marquess of Lothian

Amendment moved, in page 5, line 2, to leave out ("property") and to insert ("qualification").—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH opposed the Amendment, which, in his opinion, might give rise to many bogus qualifications. Moreover, the word in the clause was the same as that used in the English Bill. If it would meet the views of the noble Lord to insert "qualified" instead of "registered" there would be no objection.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH thought the proposed change would not be worth making, and as the Government objected to the Amendment he would not press it.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY was sorry no Scotch lawyers were present, but his impression was that the noble Lord opposite would not gain the object he had in view by the clause as it stood. The lessee and the freeholder of a house would still be two separate persons.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH was not sufficiently learned in the law to be able to reply to the suggestion, but he had been advised that the object would be attained by keeping the words as they were.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 12.

Drafting Amendment.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved to substitute "sheriff" for "county," as the Registers would be confided to the Sheriff Clerk, who would be the proper person to make them up.

Amendment moved, in page 6, line 13, to leave out ("county") and to insert ("sheriff").—(*The Marquess of Huntly.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the Government were in this case indifferent. The change suggested was not important, but as there seemed to be some difference of opinion between Sheriff Clerks and County Clerks he had no objection.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, the reason for the Amendment was that as the Sheriff Clerk was the official appointed to make up the roll he should be responsible for circulating it. It seemed unnecessary to divide the work between two officials.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY thought the Amendment would make the Bill more homogeneous.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH preferred to keep the Bill as it was.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved a new clause modifying and altering the Bill in its application to parishes in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Leith. He said the provisions of the Bill as they affected the larger Municipal Authorities would introduce most serious difficulties and would cause needless confusion and a great deal of unnecessary expenditure. Take Glasgow as a concrete case. That city was divided into five parishes, one wholly burghal and the other four partly burghal and partly landward. The affairs of the Parochial Body were managed entirely apart from the Town Council. The municipal elections for the different wards and parishes took place every year. The Parish Council elections took place once in three years, and yet under the Bill the Municipal Authorities were obliged to prepare the Register every year. That would put them to great expense. He was informed that the cost of adapting the electoral roll for the purposes of the Parish Council would be greater than the expense of preparing a special roll. Again, in large towns great difficulty would arise from having the elections for the Town Council and the Parish Council on the same day. That would certainly be the case in such places as Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee, where the provision in the 15th clause would cause great confusion. If the contemplated arrangements had been carefully examined they would not have been adopted. It was becoming more and more the custom for working classes in large towns to poll late in the evening, and already great difficulty was experienced in the voting arrangements. If parish elections with their multiplicity of candidates were to be superadded, the difficulties would be increased. Double elections would have to be held with the same Presiding Officer. He had received a letter from Sir J. Marwick, the Town Clerk of Glasgow, pointing out that the scheme of the Bill would introduce great confusion into the elections in that city. The Secretary for Scotland in the other House admitted that the provision in the Bill could not stand, but the right hon. Gentleman suggested that any amendment should be postponed until some time before the second election took place. It seemed strange to him that when a defect in the Bill was pointed out and recognised it could not be at once remedied. The proposal he now made, which was approved and supported by Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Dundee, would meet the difficulty that was apprehended. He had reason to believe that other large Municipalities in Scotland took a similar view, and he hoped the Government would see their way to accept the Amendment.

Moved to insert as a new clause—

"This Act shall apply to the parishes specified in Schedule V. annexed to this Act, subject to the modifications and alterations following (that is to say) :—

(1.) In the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, and in every third year thereafter, simultaneously with the preparation of the Municipal Register in a burgh within which any such parish is wholly or partly situated, the assessor charged with the preparation thereof shall prepare, and shall arrange in the parish wards fixed by or under the provisions of this Act, a separate list of the persons qualified to be parish electors within a burghal parish or within the burghal part of a parish; and the whole enactments of this or any other Act relative to the registration of burgh electors or parish electors, including the provisions relating to officers and dates, and to numbering and placing distinctive marks on the Register or list, shall, with the necessary alterations of notices and other forms, and other necessary variations, extend and apply to the preparation of the said list, and it shall be lawful to object to the insertion or omission of the name of any person in the part of said list applicable to a parish ward as nearly as may be in the same manner, and subject to the same provisions as to appeal and otherwise, as in the case of any entry in or omission from any Municipal Register or list;

(2.) The nomination of Parish Councillors in such parishes shall take place on the second Tuesday, and the election of such Councillors on the third Tuesday of November, in the year one thousand eight hundred and ninety eight, and in every third year thereafter;

(3.) The expenditure incurred in the preparation of the said separate list of parish electors in so far as relating to any such parish, and the expenditure incurred in the election of Parish Councillors for such parish, shall be a charge upon the poor rate levied therein.

SCHEDULE V.

Parishes.

Glasgow.
Barony.
Govan Combination.
Eastwood.
Cathcart.
Edinburgh City.
St. Cuthbert's Combination.
Liberton.
Duddington.
South Leith.
North Leith."—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the proposal of the noble Lord was practically that special treatment in regard to registration and election should be extended to certain places in Scotland. Their Lordships would agree that *primâ facie* this was not a desirable thing to do, but that there should rather be one system of treatment for the whole country. It was true that Glasgow was anxious for the clause; but, so far as he had been able to ascertain, Edinburgh and Leith, two of the other places mentioned in the Schedule, were quite indifferent. The matter, however, was not a pressing one; no real difficulty would arise in the election of 1898, and he thought it would be well to wait until they had practical experience of the Act, and if difficulty arose such as was apprehended it would be open to them to take action to meet it in a way that would apply generally to the country. At present in Edinburgh there were constantly occurring Road, Trust, and Municipal elections on the same day without trouble arising. He did not think the noble Lord had made out a pressing case, and in those circumstances he could not assent to the proposed new clause.

*THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, it would be absolutely impossible in Glasgow to carry out the provisions of the Bill as it stood without great difficulty and expense. He failed to appreciate the objections of the noble Lord in charge of the Bill to special legislation for certain places in order to meet the difficulty, and he hoped that this exception would be made at the request of the Corporation of Glasgow, and that the Amendment would be agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH thought the noble Lord had not sufficiently shown cause against the insertion of the proposed clause, and was afraid he must trouble the Committee to go to a Division upon it.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, that Glasgow was one of the greatest cities in the Empire, and had a very large population. It was in peculiar circumstances, because it had been eating up the neighbouring Municipalities for several years. Sir James Marwick was an authority of the highest standing, and nothing could be stronger than his language on the subject in the letter read by the noble Lord, showing that the Bill as it stood would be almost unworkable in Glasgow. He, therefore, could not see why the noble Lord should give way on the point.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY did not think the matter was one of vital gravity. Still, it did seem a mistake to give exceptional treatment to Glasgow in the matter, especially as such treatment, so far from giving satisfaction to the rest of Scotland, would create a great deal of jealousy, even in adjoining districts in Lanarkshire. Moreover, after the very strong expression of opinion on this very matter by Scotch Members in the other House, and in Grand Committee, he did not think their Lordships should agree to the Amendment. It was a matter which might well be left to be dealt with as his noble Friend had suggested; but if the Amendment was pressed the Government must, of course, yield to superior numbers.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY appealed to the noble Lord, in the circumstances, not to press the Amendment. There was a good deal in what the Prime Minister had said, but attention had not been generally called to the matter in Scotland. In Glasgow, however, the mischief pointed out would work more seriously, and in other large towns than in other places. Elections for parishes would overlap ward elections, and the result would be very inconvenient. The matter had not been much considered in Aberdeen, where public opinion would probably be in favour of the noble Lord's suggestion. The proper time to deal with the whole matter would be in 1898 when the elections would take place.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH observed that, in addition to the cases mentioned, the representatives of the Parochial Board of Dundee—which was not by any means an insignificant body—came up specially when they heard that this clause was to be proposed in order to have their parish put into the Schedule.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Why did you refuse?

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that the representatives only arrived to-day, and the notice was only given yesterday; but if the House should pass this clause, he was going to put Dundee down for inclusion in it to-morrow. When it was said that representations had not been made in favour of this clause, he would remind their Lordships that the clause was only put on the Paper last night, so that it was impossible for the exact text of the clause to have been seen by those to whom it had not been specially sent. He sincerely hoped the clause would be adopted, and he believed before the Bill could leave this House there would be additional representations in favour of other places being put in.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, if there was to be exceptional treatment owing to exceptional difficulty, then the same treatment should be extended to all large towns. As the matter referred only to what would take place in 1898, he did not think this was really one of the most vital matters in the Bill.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH observed that this proposal was moved on the Report stage in the House of Commons when the Representatives of these great towns were in the House of Commons, on whom the greatest pressure could have been brought to bear if their had been a strong feeling among their constituencies in the direction of this clause. What did the Members of the House of Commons do? They did not even divide in favour of their own clause. That showed that the feeling on the part of the Representatives of the large towns in the House of Commons could not have been very strong.

Clause negatived.

Clause 13.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved an Amendment providing that a copy of every Order made under this section should be transmitted to the Board within seven days after it was made, instead of 14 days as provided in the Bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14 agreed to.

Clause 15.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH moved, in line 40, after ("Council,") to insert ("or Town Councillors").

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved, in line 41, to leave out ("the principal Act or"). He said his object in putting down the Amendment was to call attention to a rather important point in connection with the Bill. As the Bill was originally introduced, the sixth part dealt with the Local Government Act (Scotland), and brought in certain Amendments to that Act which were considered a most valuable addition to the Bill. Owing to the pressure of time that part was dropped, and Clause 16 was now the only part of the Bill which affected the former Act of Parliament, and it affected it in a very important manner. This clause entirely changed the method of nomination and election of County Councillors, and it was for the Government to consider whether, in a Bill dealing entirely with Parish Councils and from which all matters relating to County Councils had been dropped, it was advisable to bring in a clause the effect of which was entirely to alter the mode of election of County Councillors. He was not at all sure that the machinery provided for the elections by this clause was not better than the present machinery, but it was certainly an anomaly in a Bill dealing with Parish Councils to bring in a clause dealing with the nomination of County Councillors.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH pointed out that the County Council and the Parish Council elections were going to take place on the same day and in the same room, and it would be a very inconvenient thing if one set of Rules was to be enforced with regard to County Councils and another set with regard to Parish Councils. Surely it was better to make the change here, and allow the same Rules to be applicable to both elections, which were held at the same time and in the same place.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: I will not press the Amendment.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 17 agreed to.

Clause 18.

The following two Amendments were on the Paper:—

Lord BALFOUR:

"Line 15, leave out from ('thereof') to the end of the clause, and insert ('If an equality of votes occur between two or more candidates whose position on the poll is such that all of them cannot be elected, the Returning Officer shall decide which of such candidates shall be returned as duly elected.'")

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN:

"Line 15, to leave out from ('two') to ('can') in line 16, and insert ('or more candidates receive an equal number of votes, being more than.'")

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: Has the Government any objection to this Amendment?

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he was quite indifferent as to which set of words were taken, but he preferred those of the noble Earl.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN moved his Amendment, which was accepted, as was also a purely consequential Amendment thereto.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: Is it intended that the Returning Officer should have a casting vote even if he does not happen to be a voter in the parish?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Oh, certainly, that must be so.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 19.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that before he came to the part of the clause to which his Amendment referred he should like to ask a question of the Government. He thought an undertaking was given in another place that the Government would put down an Amendment to get rid of the determination by lot as to which of certain persons should be chairman in the event of an equality of votes. He did not know whether they persisted in adhering to this gambling method of settling who should be chairman. As he understood an undertaking was given to consider the matter, he should like to ask what had been the result of that consideration?

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I am afraid I must plead my want of cognisance of such an undertaking. I will make inquiries about it, and, if necessary, make some change on the Third Reading.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved, in line 20, after the second ("Council") insert ("sitting as a district committee"). He said, he thought these words were obviously necessary as a matter of drafting. It could be the intention of the Government only to put a representative from the Parish Council on the County Council when it sat as a district committee in those places in which no district had been formed. He thought serious misapprehension might arise if the words were not inserted, and, at any rate, they could do no harm.

Amendment moved, in line 20, after the second ("Council"), insert ("sitting as a district committee").—(*The Lord Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved, in line 23, at end of the clause, add—

("Provided always that, in the case of parishes partly landward and partly burghal, he shall be appointed by the landward committee from among their own number").

The Amendment, he said, was to provide that where a landward committee was appointed, and which acted as part of the Parochial Board for certain purposes, the representation of the landward part of the parish on the district committee should be made by the landward committee, and not by the whole Parochial Board. This was obviously just, because it was only the part of the landward parish which was interested in the work of the district committee. The matters relating to the roads and public health were under the management of the Municipal Authority; therefore, the interests of the municipal and the landward part of the parish often conflicted, and it was not fair that an overwhelming number of the Parochial Board should appoint representatives who might often properly have to decide things against their interest. Many instances had been sent to him, but he would only cite one. Paisley was in this position. So far as the Abbey parish of Paisley was concerned, there were at the last Census more than 25,000 people within the burgh, 9,000 within the burgh of Johnstone, and 7,000 in the landward part of the parish. The valuation of the landward parish was very large in proportion to the population. The valuation of the landward part was £55,000, whilst that of the two burghs concerned was about £150,000 or £160,000. It seemed to him not arguable that the whole Parochial Board under these circumstances should appoint a representative to the district committee. He hoped the Government would accept both this and the consequential Amendment upon the Definition Clause.

Amendment moved, in line 23, at end of the Clause, add—

("Provided always that, in the case of parishes partly landward and partly burghal, he shall be appointed by the landward committee from among their own number.")—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the Government saw no objection to the insertion of the words.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 20 and 21 agreed to.

Clause 22.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved, in line 33, at the end of the clause, insert—

"Provided always as follows:—A. Where relief has been or shall be granted to any person otherwise than upon an order or judgment of the Sheriff pronounced under section seventy-three of the Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845, it shall be lawful for any two Parish Councillors, or for any five ratepayers of the parish, to lodge a written complaint with the Sheriff of the county in which the parish from which such person has claimed relief, or any portion of such parish, is situated, complaining that such person is not legally entitled to relief, and setting forth the ground of such complaint, and the said Sheriff shall forthwith, if he be of opinion that such person is, upon the facts stated, not legally entitled to relief, order intimation of such application to be made to such person, and also to the clerk of the Parish Council, requiring them, within a time to be specified in the order, to give in a statement in writing showing the reasons why the relief was granted, and the Sheriff, after such procedure as he shall deem necessary, shall make an Order finding such person to be legally either entitled or not entitled to relief, and such order shall be final and binding on the Parish Council: Provided that nothing herein contained shall be construed to enable the said Sheriff to determine on the adequacy of the relief, or to interfere in respect of the amount of relief to be given in any individual case."

"B. Where relief has been or shall be granted to any person, it shall be lawful for any two Parish Councillors, or any five ratepayers of the parish, to lodge a written complaint with the Board, complaining that the relief granted is excessive in amount, or is of a kind that should not have been granted, and setting forth the grounds of such complaint; and the Board shall, after such intimation as shall be deemed proper, investigate the grounds of the complaint: and if upon inquiry it shall appear to the Board that such complaint is well founded in whole or in part, the Board may order the Parish Council to reduce the amount or to vary the kind of relief granted as may be specified in the Order, and the Parish Council shall make such reduction or variation accordingly: Provided that where any such complaint has been made and disposed of no subsequent complaint touching the same poor person shall be competent unless either (1) such poor person has in the meantime ceased to be in receipt of relief, or (2) such a material change of circumstances is averred as in the opinion of the Board warrants a further investigation."

He said, that the two clauses raised a matter the importance of which would not be questioned for a moment by the Government, whatever their views might be about the merits of the proposal. The real object of the clauses was to prevent maladministration of the Poor Law. So far as the general part of Scotland was concerned, they on that side of the House had accepted with perfect cheerfulness the proposed change in the body which was to administer the Poor Law. The Government themselves would not doubt it was a very great change that, for the first time in the history of Scotland, the administration of the Poor Law was to be put into the hands of a purely and entirely popularly-elected body. They had accepted that proposal of the Government because they had perfect confidence in their fellow-countrymen that they would not make a bad use of the power so entrusted to them, and they also felt that the system of rating in Scotland gave them very considerable freedom in the matter. But there were in Scotland parishes here and there where this proposal would be very dangerous, and it could not be denied that very considerable apprehensions did exist in the minds of persons well qualified to judge as to the dangers which might arise. There was an exact precedent in the existing law for the proposals which he made. The Poor Law of 1845, which was the first Poor Law as such known to Scotland, put the administration of relief into the hands of bodies which largely represented the owners of different parishes, and so anxious were the promoters of that measure to secure fairness and justice to all concerned that they put two provisions into it, one of which gave to anybody who had applied for relief and had been refused it the right of appeal to the Sheriff. If the application was altogether rejected the appeal lay to the Sheriff under the existing law. Then, again, if the Parochial Board gave relief, but in the opinion of the applicant did not give sufficient relief, the appeal lay to the Board of Supervision. The reason which underlay the difference was not far to seek. In the first case, it was considered to be a matter of law whether the person was really entitled, under the Act, to relief at all; but if the Parochial Board admitted the right to relief, the question of the adequacy of the relief was a matter of administration rather than of law, and, therefore, the appeal lay to the Central Authority and not to the Law Courts. He had already admitted that there could not be danger all over Scotland, but when there was danger of insufficient relief under the old constitution of Parochial Boards it would be pedantic to deny there was not the same danger here and there in the opposite direction. The proposals he made were these: The first proviso (a) provided that if two members of a Parish Council or five ratepayers in a parish thought that relief was wrongly given to any person they might appeal to the Sheriff. The proviso (b) provided that if the right to relief was admitted, but was considered to be wrong in kind, an appeal might lie to the Board. He knew that the existing circumstances had worked absolutely without friction and difficulty, and it seemed to him it was not difficult to establish that under the constitution of the Boards as they were now proposed there would, in some cases, be representation without taxation, and the duty of administering the Poor Law would be admitted to be about as delicate and difficult a duty as could be entrusted to anybody. The people in many parishes who would never have to pay a farthing of the rates directly would not only influence, but have the absolute and complete control of the elections. He put forward his proposals in no spirit of hostility to the Bill, but simply and solely from a desire that there should be a means of redress, inoffensive in its nature, but perfectly effectual should difficulty and danger arise. He hoped the Government would accept his clause. He was quite aware he might be told that when it was proposed to discuss them in another place they were ruled out of Order. But doctors apparently differed, because they were admitted by the Chairman of the Grand Committee and discussed at considerable length, and it came as a great surprise upon those who were advocating a proposal of this kind when it was found impossible to take the judgment of the other House upon it. When they transferred the whole administration of the Poor Law from the bodies who at present administered it to popularly-elected bodies it was only right and reasonable that some such safeguards as these should be put in. He had framed the Amendment in a slightly different way from the form in which the matter was discussed in the other House, although the merits were not substantially different, and he now proposed that the clauses should be inserted as a proviso to that part of the Bill which dealt entirely with the transference of powers and duties to the Parish Councils.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the clause moved by the noble Lord referred to the administration of the Poor Law, but the Bill did not touch the administration of the Poor Law in any way whatever, but simply transferred the Poor Law from the existing Parochial Boards to the new bodies—the Parish Councils. Mr. Speaker in the other House ruled this proposed clause out of Order, and he should like to ask the Chairman of

Committees whether they were in Order ?

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (The Earl of Morley) : The noble Lord cannot do that.

*Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, that at any rate he would not discuss the details of the clause. He would merely say that in the view of the Government it was not desirable to enter into the question of the Poor Law on this Bill, which proposed only to transfer the powers as they were from the Parochial Boards to the Parish Councils, and therefore they could not accept this Amendment.

The Duke of ARGYLL did not wish to speak upon the technical question of Order, but it was really a little strong to say that this Bill did not touch the question of the Poor Law. It changed and completely revolutionised the body and the principle on which the body was constituted to administer the Poor Law. There were parts of the country where a very small part of the rental was paid by a very large part of the constituency, and along the West Coast of Scotland there were parishes where the whole power of rating would be put into the hands of a very poor class of voters who would pay a mere fraction of the total rates they imposed on their neighbours. Setting aside any accusation of a disposition to job, the noble Lord must have observed the extreme kindness of small crofters in the West of Scotland with regard to their neighbours. They were most amiable towards them; they were generally in close connection with them, and nothing could be more amiable than their disposition towards them. He had lately had repeated application from the holders of crofting townships to allow persons to squat upon their lands, and although they knew that had led to grievous evil in former times yet their infinite benevolence and good feeling towards their neighbours made them uniformly willing to write letters of recommendation that people should be allowed to squat on their farms. The same disposition would undoubtedly prevail in the constitution of the new Parochial Board, and he could not help thinking that not only was there a danger, but a very high probability that in many cases persons would be admitted to relief who by law were not entitled to it, and even persons who were entitled to it would be given a larger benevolence than was their due. All his noble Friend wished to obtain was the security of the existing law in which they had an appeal in regard to the legality of persons entitled to relief, and also to the Board as regarded the more than sufficiency of the relief. In his opinion, loosely or lavishly administered poor rates by persons not really responsible for any great share of the rates was one of the greatest calamities that they could inflict upon any county, and it undoubtedly discouraged enterprise and the taking of land in those parishes. In such circumstances, reasonable precautions ought to be taken by Parliament in giving extensive powers to a body which was entirely new, and he hoped the Amendment would be accepted.

*Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, he had a little more confidence in the small holders in the West of Scotland than the noble Duke seemed to have, and he had no fear that they were going to be unduly lavish with their poor relief. But was it really worth while proceeding with these clauses ? If they put them in the Bill they would, on reaching the Commons, be ruled out of Order without discussion.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH : How do you know that ?

*Lord TWEEDMOUTH : The Speaker has already ruled them out of Order as going beyond the scope of the Bill. Any safeguards there are with regard to the administration of Poor Law relief by the Parochial Boards are still retained. Nothing is lost in the way of appeal or otherwise, and, further, the Parochial Boards in Scotland are already to some extent elective; and, therefore, the difference between the two bodies is not so great as the noble Duke would have us believe.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH did not see how the clauses, if put in by this House, could be summarily ruled out of Order in another place. Those who had discretion there might refuse to accept them, but it seemed to him the claim put forward that because the authorities of one House had ruled a certain proposal out of Order, such ruling was, therefore, to govern the decision of another House was a very dangerous claim in a matter of privilege, and, so far from thinking not to divide on that ground, it made him rather more inclined to divide, for fear that they should be giving way to a most unusual claim put forward in a matter of privilege, which was always somewhat difficult and delicate to determine. On the merits of the case he regarded his proposal as of the highest importance. The welfare of the communities was so closely bound up with a fair and intelligent administration of the Poor Law that they must do all that lay in their power to keep up the good sense of responsibility in regard to it. He hoped the Committee would accept the Amendment.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that if they were discussing a Bill about the Poor Law itself he should almost certainly vote with the noble Lord, for there was a great deal to be said in favour of the change he proposed. But the Amendment, at the present time, hardly seemed to him germane to the Bill, which was simply a Bill creating Parish Councils.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): Is it perfectly certain that this is a matter we should be entitled to deal with? It has been recognised in this House more than once that where there is a provision for rates that it is contrary to privilege to deal with or alter the constitution of the body that disposes of the rates. That is the view maintained and submitted to by this House more than once. It is true that in this case, although you enable the new body to interfere with the disposition of the money it can never be by way of increase. Possibly that may make a difference, but I do not think it is perfectly clear.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I must demur to the statement that it had ever been admitted that it was contrary to privilege for this House to deal with such matters as these. Whether it was desirable to do this or not was a matter on which he felt he ought to submit to the judgment of the Scotch Members; but he did not think the House of Commons had any right, or the Lords would have any right, to bar the consideration of any clause by saying it was out of Order, or was not germane to the Bill. He could not imagine that if the Amendment were sent down it had any chance of life, although there was a great deal to be said for it. He was in the position of the fox in the fable who had lost his tail. They had already accepted the principle that those who did not pay the rates were to fix the amount of the rates to be paid by those who did, and that was the law of England at the present moment. It was proposed that Scotland should be exempted from that state of things, and he should be very glad if they should succeed. He confessed, however, he was not very sanguine of their being able to do so, and his own impression was that it was not worth while to challenge the decision of the House; but if a decision was challenged, he should certainly vote for the Amendment.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN, though rather against putting forward the clause, did not think it open to the objection that it interfered with the rates, for it merely treated of the conditions under which the relief was to be given.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY said, that as the noble Marquess opposite had pronounced the epitaph of the clause by saying it had no possible chance of acceptance in the other House, and although it was quite obvious that the question it raised of administration whilst important was not really relevant to the main object of the Bill, he did not think the noble Lord would wish to press the Amendment. It did seem to him that unless the noble Lord was anxious, like a knight of old, to challenge the House of Commons in his own person, for the mere pleasure of doing so, it was hardly worth while pressing the Amendment.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, the appeal of the Prime Minister was a very forcible one. He would point out that the Government had said absolutely nothing against the merits of the proposal, and he withdrew it now on the understanding that such withdrawal did not prejudice his action on any future occasion.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clause 24.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN moved, in line 42, at beginning of Sub-section (a) insert ("subject to the consent of the County Council"). He said, as the sub-section stood it stated that the Parish Council might provide or acquire land for building public offices and for meetings or other public purposes whatsoever. There was no limitation upon their powers, and there was nothing like this in the English Act. He proposed by his Amendment that the discretion of the Parish Council should be subject to the consent of the County Council. There was another Amendment down by the Marquess of Huntly, and he should be quite content if that were given effect to instead of his own; for while he had no distrust of the Parish Council, he thought that in one form or other it was necessary to have some means of controlling the Parish Council.

Amendment moved, in line 42, at beginning of sub-section (a) insert ("subject to the consent of the County Council.")—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH admitted the force of the argument as to the section going beyond the English Act. He thought, however, it would be better not to take the noble Lord's Amendment, as it might have the effect of bringing the County Council and the Parish Council into conflict, and he thought of the two proposals it would be better to adopt the words of the noble Marquess.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved, in line 43, leave out ("other public purposes") and insert—

("And for any purposes connected with parish business, or with the powers or duties of the Parish Council.")

Amendment agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved to omit Sub-section (c), which empowered the Parish Council to provide or acquire land for the erection of workmen's dwellings. This, he said, was a most dangerous power to put into the hands of the Parish Council, and was not germane in any way to the Bill. The Parish Council under this sub-section might acquire land, and then let it to a speculative builder, who would put "jerry" buildings upon it; and the Parish Council might continue such speculations as long as they kept within the rates. It was not advisable to deal with the question of workmen's dwellings by means of a sub-section in a Bill relating to an entirely different matter, and he begged to move the omission of the sub-section.

Amendment moved, to leave out Sub-section (c).—(*The Marquess of Huntly.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH asked the House to maintain the sub-section. He did not think it was a serious or revolutionary power to give to the Parish Council. After all, the Parish Council's powers were strictly limited by its borrowing powers, and the Scotch Local Government Board would also offer a useful check upon reckless or extravagant schemes. On the other hand, in many a parish where there was great difficulty for workmen or fishermen to get sites for cottages, the provision would be a great boon.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH sincerely hoped the Committee would not pass the sub-section. It seemed to him a most dangerous thing to do, and this seemed to be admitted by Sir George Trevelyan in Committee, who said that if the Amendment were accepted the alterations required in the law would be much increased, and he could not accept the Amendment. That Amendment, however, in the Committee was carried against the Government. He objected to an abstract power of the kind being given when no machinery was provided. He did not agree that the borrowing powers furnished an adequate control. A Parish Council might buy a bit of land and re-sell it, and again with another bit of land, until they bought up a very large place.

On question? whether sub-section (c) shall stand part of the clause,

Their Lordships divided:—Contents 16; Not-Contents 38.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved, in line 29, leave out from ("Act") to the end of the sub-section. He said, this sub-section enabled the Parish Council to secure the enforcement of the Public Health Act. That was a wise power to give, and one he desired to see exercised, but the last part of the sub-section which contained the words he proposed to leave out would confer upon the Parish Council the powers which at the present moment were conferred on the Public Health Committee of the County Council. Thus there was given to a Parish Council, with a view to the due enforcement of the Public Health Acts, the same powers as were conferred upon a County Council by Sub-section 2 of Section 53 of the principal Act. The sub-section overrode the Public Health Committee of the County Council, and put the matter into the hands of the Parish Council. His objection to this was that the two bodies would be exercising the same powers, and that this might lead to friction.

Amendment moved, in line 29, to leave out from ("Act") to the end of the sub-section.—(*The Marquess of Huntly.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, there was no intention of allowing the Parish Councils to override the County Councils in this matter. But the Parish Council was the body to whom the existence of nuisances and any violations of the Public Health Acts within the parish would be clearly brought home, and the clause merely gave that body power to approach the Local Government Board on the subject.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, the ground of his objection was that the Parish Council and the County Council would be doing the same thing. He would not, however, press the matter.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 25.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved, in line 37, after ("may,") insert ("if they think proper.") He said, this was a mere drafting Amendment. He supposed the promoters of the Bill wanted to give the County Council perfect option. But in one case they said "may make an order," putting in force &c., and then four lines lower down they said "if they think proper." Whichever form of words was adopted ought to be the same in both instances, for fear of misapprehension and difficulty arising.

Amendment moved, in line 37, after ("may,") insert ("if they think proper.")—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH would prefer the second form ("if they think proper"), as that would be in strict conformity with the English Act.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL asked whether it was the fact that "may" had a compulsory meaning?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): I should say that, as a general rule, "may" gives discretion. It is only in certain circumstances that it is considered compulsory.

Amendment agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, that for the first time in any Act of Parliament affecting Scotland it was proposed to give this new Board supreme power, there being no provision for the revision in the Courts of Law of any of its decisions. He was quite aware that the words in the Bill were the same as in the English Act; but he questioned the wisdom of following the precedent in that direction. He should prefer an arrangement by which an interested party who felt that the Board had acted *ultra vires* in any of its decisions should have the right to appeal to the Court of Sessions. He, therefore, hoped the Amendment he had on the Paper to that effect would be accepted.

Amendment moved, in page 17, line 28, leave out from ("made,") to ("and,") in line 29.—(*The Marquess of Huntly.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he was surprised at the quarter from which this Amendment came, because the sub-section which the noble Marquess proposed to leave out was part of some carefully adjusted words which were, in the case of a controversy between the two Houses on the English Act, the result of negotiations conducted between the noble Marquess's leader—the Duke of Devonshire—and the Government; and were by common consent inserted in the English Act. He hoped, therefore, that their Lordships would not make a new precedent in the Scotch Act, but would keep the Scotch Act on all-fours with the English Act. If the Board were not left the final decision in the matter the intention of Parliament would be frustrated.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said, that perhaps the Government would accept his Amendment, raising the same point, which stood next on the Paper. The procedure proposed in that Amendment was well-known in Scotland, was extremely cheap and thoroughly effective. The proposal had been copied from the Educational Endowments Act which was passed by Parliament under the guidance of a Liberal Administration; and as he had been Chairman of the Commission that worked under that Act, he could tell the House that when the procedure was resorted to a decision was obtained at the expense of only a few pounds, and within a week. It seemed to him that the power which the Bill proposed to give to the Board was an extraordinary and dangerous power to give to a body which would really be controlled by the Secretary for Scotland, who was a political official; and which would be an interested party in some of the matters which would come before it for final decision. Why should the Board be given the power to interpret the Act in disputed cases when a simple and cheap procedure for obtaining the opinion of the Court of Session, and satisfactory to everybody, could be provided? The noble Lord alluded to the proceedings on the English Act when this clause was passed, after a great deal of heated controversy. But he did not want to raise again those disputed questions. If the Government did not see their way to accept the Amendment before the Committee he hoped they would accept his Amendment.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he preferred the moderate and wise proposal of Lord Balfour to the Amendment before the Committee, and he hoped the Government would accept it. He thought recourse would only be made to the proposed procedure in cases where it was believed that injustice had been done by the Board.

*Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, the proviso standing in the name of Lord Balfour was less objectionable than the Amendment before the Committee. But it seemed strange to find Scotchmen expressing want of confidence in the Scotch Local Government Board which Englishmen had not expressed towards the English Board. [*Cries of* "We did!"]

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I expressed it in the strongest manner.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH: Your Lordships may have expressed it, but you did not act upon it.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: We did not wreck the Bill on account of it.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, he thought that on matters of procedure the Scotch Act should run on all-fours with the English Act.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said, the English Local Government Board was a well-known Board, with well-known traditions and a well-known policy. But here they were starting an entirely new Board for Scotland, in which he might tell the Lord Privy Seal he had no confidence at all. So far as the constitution of the Board was concerned, it was the worst that could be devised, and he did not think a good word could be said for it.

The Marquess of HUNTLY said, he would withdraw his Amendment in favour of the Amendment of Lord Balfour.

The Duke of ARGYLL: I think it exceptional that powers given by Statute to anybody should be substituted for the jurisdiction of the Courts of Law. It is contrary to the British Constitution. The words in the Bill make this new Board, which is absolutely under the control of the Secretary for Scotland, the supreme judge, whether it has or has not violated the law in the exercise of its power. The Queen's subjects have the right of appeal to the Courts of Law on questions whether the new powers given by Parliament to Bodies have been exercised according to the Act.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Amendment moved, in page 17, line 30, at the end of Sub-section 7, insert—

"Provided always that the Board may, and, when required by any party interested who has presented a Memorial against the Order, shall, state a special case on the question whether the proposed Order is within the powers conferred by this Act for the opinion of either divisions of the Court of Session who are hereby authorised finally to determine the same along with any question of expenses."—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

Amendment agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved to leave out "Board," in line 13, and insert "Sheriff of the County." The object of the Amendment was to secure that the arbitrators should be appointed by the Sheriff, who was a neutral person, and not by the Board, which was an interested party. He did not wish to pass Amendments offensive to the Government more than was absolutely necessary; and if this Amendment was objected to he would not press it.

Amendment moved, in page 18, line 13, leave out "Board" and insert "Sheriff of the County."—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

*__LORD TWEEDMOUTH__ said, he did not need the assurance of the noble Lord that he would not press any Amendments offensive to the Government. He thought it would be necessary to keep in the word "Board," because it was in harmony with other precedents. In the Scotch Allotments Act it was the Secretary for Scotland who appointed the arbitrators, and he thought it was better that the arbitrators should be appointed by an Administrative Body rather than by a judicial personage.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, there was a difference between the two cases. In the case of the Allotments Act the Secretary for Scotland was not an interested party; but under this Bill he was the representative of one of the interested parties.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

*__THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN__ moved to insert in the clause, as a new sub-section—

> "The Parish Council shall make and maintain sufficient fences for separating the land taken, whether by purchase or on lease, from the lands not taken, and also all necessary drains of such dimensions as will be sufficient at all times to convey the water as clearly as before from the adjoining lands not taken; and also, in the event of existing watering places for cattle being interfered with, to make and maintain watering places equally suitable and convenient."

If the Bill had not been compulsory he would not have moved such an Amendment. But when land was taken compulsorily it was only fair that no unnecessary expense or trouble should be placed on the shoulders of the owner from whom the land was taken away. It would be seen that his Amendment dealt with fences, drainage, and water supply. With regard to fences, the general—though not the universal—Scotch law was that boundary fences should be put up and maintained by the owners at each side. Under the Bill, however, it was not clear that fences were to be made and maintained by mutual expenditure; and in order to protect a landlord, who had some of his land taken away, from the injustice of being at the sole expense of putting up the necessary fences, he proposed that that the Parish Council should make and maintain sufficient fences for separating the land taken from the land not taken. Then with regard to drainage, it might be that the drains of the entire field might run through the portion of the land taken away; and if those drains were interfered with, or were not kept up, the remaining portion of the field might become a swamp, without any power in the owner to remedy the defect except by consent of the Parish Council. With regard to the water supply for cattle, it was still more necessary that some protection should be given to the owner of the land; because the portion of the field taken from him might be the portion that was best supplied with water. Nowadays it was extremely difficult to provide a water supply for lands. Landlords had often to provide water from a distance at great expense; and it was only fair, if an owner was deprived of his water supply with his land, that the Parish Council should provide another supply. For those reasons, he trusted that the Government would accept his Amendment.

Amendment moved, in page 18, line 24, after ("compulsory") insert as a new sub-section—

> "The Parish Council shall make and maintain sufficent fences for separating the land taken, whether by purchase or on lease, from the lands not taken, and also all necessary drains of such dimensions as will be sufficient at all times to convey the water as clearly as before from the adjoining lands not taken; and also, in the event of existing watering places for cattle being interfered with, to make and maintain watering places equally suitable and convenient."—(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the Government could not accept the Amendment. In the first place, English Parish Councils were not required to make and maintain those fences; and he did not think they should throw on the Scotch Parish Councils a burden the English Parish Councils were not asked to bear. With regard to the drainage question, he was advised that by the ordinary Common Law of Scotland the maintenance of necessary drains would be a servitude which would naturally go with the land, and that the Parish Council, therefore, would be bound to look after the drains. Again, if existing watering places for cattle were interfered with, it would be a damage by severance for which a remedy was provided by Scots law. That portion of the Amendment dealing with drainage and watering places, was, therefore, unnecessary.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN said, the remedy provided by Scots law for damage to water supply was by way of compensation only. That would not meet the difficulty, for money compensation would not make up for the loss of the water.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN could not see why it was a hardship to make the Parish Councils fence their allotments. Supposing two acres of a six-acred field was taken by the Parish Council for allotment, and that the four acres remaining with the proprietor were in grass with a cow or two, or a bull, grazing on them, was the proprietor to be made liable for any damage done by the bull in the absence of fences when, if the proprietor had been left undisturbed in his land, the bull would have six acres fenced in on which to roam about quietly? Surely it would be treating the proprietor harshly to compel him to fence the land that was taken from him by the Parish Council.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the Government were willing to place on the Parish Council the duty of making sufficient fences for separating the land taken.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that would not meet the difficulty. It seemed to him that unless there was also some provision for the mutual maintenance of the fences the obligation would rest solely on the owner from whom the land was taken.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I should think the natural person to maintain the fences would be the allotment holder and not the Parish Council or the proprietor.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I do not know what the Scots law may be; but in England the occupier has to make and maintain the fences.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: Scots law is different. It provides for the mutual making and maintenance of fences. I do not think I can accept the noble Lord's proposal as sufficient.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, the words of the Amendment were taken from the Railways Act. It was first suggested that the clause of the Railways Act, covering those matters, should be inserted in the Bill; but it having been pointed out that those clauses were cumbrous, it was decided by a few of their Lordships who had considered the subject to draft from those clauses a short sub-section which would meet the merits of the case. That sub-section was the Amendment before the Committee; and he thought its insertion in the Bill was very desirable and very just.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: I am advised that the questions of drainage and water supply are already met by the Common Law of Scotland. I think there is a grievance with reference to the making and maintenance of fences, and that the Earl of Camperdown's amusing apologue of the bull has some foundation for it. Would the noble Marquess drop the portion of his Amendment which deals with drains and water supply, and take such words as these—

> "The Parish Council shall make and maintain jointly with the proprietor sufficient fences for separating the land taken,"

&c.? If so, we will agree to them.

*THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN: I will accept the words if they run in this way—

> "The Parish Council shall make and shall jointly with the proprietor maintain sufficient fences.'

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: Yes; the idea is that the Parish Council shall make the fences and maintain them jointly with the proprietor.

Amendment moved, in page 18, line 24, after ("compulsory") insert, as a new sub-section—

"The Parish Council shall make, and shall jointly with the proprietor maintain sufficient fences for separating the land taken, whether by purchase or on lease, from the lands not taken."—(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved, in page 18, line 40, after ("purchasing") insert "the whole or any part of.")—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

Amendment agreed to.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH moved to amend the clause by excluding from its operation any land which in the opinion of the County Council or Board is being held and may be required for the extention of a factory or public work.

Amendment moved, in page 19, line 2, after ("undertaking") insert—

("or any land which in the opinion of the County Council or Board is being held and may be required for the extension of a factory or public work.")—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH suggested the substitution of "or" for "and" in the phrase "is being held and may be required," with a view to enlarge the scope of the Amendment.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked why land for the extension of a factory only should be excepted from the operation of the clause? He did not see why land attached to a shop should not also be excepted. Then he would like to know the meaning of "public work." In Scotland a "public work" was a work that had nothing to do with the public; it was a work that belonged to a private manufacture. He suggested the words "any other commercial undertaking" instead of "public work."

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he could not consent to the change of "and" for "or," as it would make two conditions against the taking of such land. What the Government wanted to exclude from the operation of the clause was land that was immediately required, and not land that might be required 20 years hence. He also thought it would be dangerous to extend the Amendment to commercial undertakings. It was difficult to say what was not a commercial undertaking in those days.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Do you propose to take land that is behind a shop?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Yes; if it is not required for the purposes of the shop.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 26.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN asked for a definition of the words "near the parish," in line 24. If the Parish Council had power to take land for allotments "near the parish" it might mean that they could go roaming all over the country side looking for land.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I should think the words mean "contiguous to the parish."

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, the Bill as it stood provided that the Parish Council might permit to be erected on an allotment any stable, byre, or barn, and give the allotment holder compensation for such buildings at the end of the tenancy. He proposed to amend that provision by adding the words—

"but such stable, byre, or barn, shall not, unless erected with the assent in writing of the landlord, be the subject of compensation, but may be removed by the tenant on the determination of the tenancy."

In the case of a small allotment, a stable, byre, or barn which the allotment holder might erect on the land would be useless to him; and yet the clause said that he must pay the compensation for it when the tenancy came to an end. That was distinctly in the teeth of the Agricultural Holdings Act, which provided that no building was to form the subject of compensation unless the building had been erected with the assent in writing of the landlord. His Amendment, therefore, declared, in the first place, that the owner should not be required to pay unless he gave his assent to the building in writing. In the next place, his Amendment sought to remove a possible hardship to the tenant. A man might put up a stable on his allotment, and it was hard to say that at the end of the tenancy that stable belonged to the landlord. He thought it was only fair to allow the tenant to remove the building if he could.

Amendment moved, in page 20, line 31, after ("barn") insert—

("but such stable, byre, or barn, shall not, unless erected with the assent in writing of the landlord, be the subject of compensation, but may be removed by the tenant on the determination of the tenancy.")—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, the noble Lord in charge of the Bill had spoken very frequently of the virtues of the English Act. Well, the equivalent of the clause in the English Act specially provided that when an allotment holder claimed compensation for buildings the provisions of the Agricultural Holdings Act should be strictly followed in settling the claim. He therefore hoped the Amendment would be accepted.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I think the words are harmless, and an improvement to the clause. I therefore accept them.

Amendment agreed to.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: I have not given notice of any Amendment, and perhaps I have no right to press the point I am about to raise. But I desire to direct attention to the effect—I think the unforeseen effect—of the words at the end of the 8th sub-section of the clause. They provide that no land shall be taken on lease which is already occupied or owned by small holders within the meaning of the Small Holdings Act, 1892. That is quite reasonable. The object of Parliament is to increase the number of small holders; and it would be inconsistent with the intentions of Parliament and with public feeling to arbitrarily interfere with those who have already got small holdings. But the sub-section goes on—

"or under the Crofters' Holdings Act, 1886, or any Act amending the same."

That places it absolutely out of the power of the County Council, or the Parish Council, to take for allotments or small holdings land held by crofters. That provision would be reasonable if crofters were small holders, but they are not; they are quite different. In the West of Scotland there are large tracts of pasture land, oftentimes including the whole side of the country—a townland, as it is called in Ireland, or a township as it is known in Scotland—occupied by crofters which is very suitable for allotments, but which the Parish Council will not be authorised to take if this provision remains in the Bill. I will give the Committee an illustration. I own an island, which is largely populated by crofters. A large part of the island—I think 10,000 acres, including a large part of the sea-shore—is used by the crofters in common; and not a single acre of that large tract of country will be available for small allotments for the labouring classes if those words are allowed to stand in the Bill. Beside the crofters there are on this island cottiers who are also fishermen. They often apply to me for small possessions, but I cannot comply with their request, because under the Crofters' Act I cannot deprive the crofters of any of their possessions. I would, therefore, suggest the omission of the words—

"or under the Crofters' Holdings Act, 1886, or any Act amending the same,"

in order to allow the Local Bodies to give small possessions to labourers or fishers, when they ask for them, out of the pasture lands held by the crofters.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he could not agree offhand to the omission of the words suggested by the noble Duke; but, speaking for himself, he thought there could be no objection to some method being devised whereby pasture land held by crofters which was suitable for allotments might be made available for that purpose. But he did not think it would be wise to allow arable land on a crofter's holding to be broken up for allotments. He would consider the matter before the Report stage, and endeavour to find some method of meeting the difficulty.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, he agreed with the noble Lord that the restriction should apply to arable land, but thought the pasture land of the character he had described should be available for allotments. He was satisfied with the promise of the noble Lord, and would not press the matter further.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved to amend the sub-section which reserves the rights of the landlord with respect to lands for working and winning mines, minerals, or surface minerals thereunder by including "feuing." Constant complaints were made that there was great difficulty in the community getting land for feuing round some of the populous places of Scotland, and he rather feared that the clause as it stood would create further difficulty. In addition to that, he thought the clause in itself was unjust. The time for which land might be taken for allotments was extended to 35 years. Anyone who could look back for 35 years could appreciate what the effect of this provision, if it then existed, would have been on certain communities that had greatly extended within that time; and it seemed to him that this was a matter in which they might legitimately draw guidance from the experience of the past. He did not think that the English Bill was a fair precedent in this case as the system of feuing was unknown in England; and as really no injustice would be done by his Amendment he hoped it would be accepted.

Amendment moved, in page 21, line 16, after ("thereunder") insert ("for feuing").—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH thought the noble Lord was introducing into the section a matter to which it had no reference whatever. The section referred purely to mineral rights and the working of mineral rights below the surface by retaining the use of those rights to the landlord. He did not think the Government could assent to the Amendment.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL pointed out that under the Crofters' Act the landlord had power to resume possession of land for feuing, and he thought a similar power should be given in this Bill. The matter was very important. Land on the Western Coast of Scotland which a few years ago had little value had greatly improved in value for feuing purposes owing to the desire of large and increasing numbers of residents in the large towns of Scotland to spend a portion of the year by the sea. Yet the clause would deprive the landlord of the value of his property in that respect for 35 years. He thought that unreasonable and quite unnecessary for the purposes of allotment. It was all very well to say that the clause dealt with a different matter. He did not see why the subsection should not be made to include other rights of property as well as mineral rights. Over a large portion of Scotland there were no valuable minerals—no coal mines and no metalliferous mines; and therefore the clause gave no benefit to landowners, while it denied him the benefit of being able to resume possession of his land for building purposes.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that if the clause were not amended they would have in the immediate vicinity of a large town the Parish Council taking land for the purposes of allotments and preventing the owner from making any better use of the land, and that state of things might go on for ever.

Amendment agreed to.

On Motion of Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Line 17, after ("winning"), insert ("or feuing").

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 27 and 28 agreed to.

On Motion of Lord TWEEDMOUTH, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 23, line 13, leave out ("of such roads or ways").

Line 15, leave out ("such road or way") and insert ("any such way").

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH asked what was the meaning of "public way" in the clause? The language was not known in the Scots' law, and there was no definition of it in the Definition Clause.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the definition of "public way" was really given at the beginning of the clause. It said—

> "Not being highways or footpaths at the side of a highway within the meaning of the Roads and Bridges (Scotland) Act, 1878."

The particular public ways referred to were such as the not very well kept ways over moors used by children going and coming from school. It was a good thing to enable the Parish Councils to look after those ways; but if the noble Lord thought it was necessary that there should be an absolute definition of "public ways," the Government would be quite ready to insert such a definition in the Definition Clause.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, he did not doubt that the object was excellent; but he doubted whether the way proposed in the Bill was the legal way to carry out that object. However, if the noble Lord's advisers said it was all right, and that there would be no dispute about it, he had no more to say.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : We do not think there will be any dispute.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 30.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, this was one of the most extraordinary clauses he ever saw, and it was a case in which the English Act would not help the noble Lord in charge of the Bill at all. There was no limitation in the clause, and he was advised that it would be technically possible for the Parish Council to appoint additional trustees to assist the trustees already appointed under a marriage settlement. For instance, a modest amount of his means was in marriage settlements, which were managed by trustees for the benefit of himself, his wife, and his children, who were, of course, inhabitants of the parish in which they resided. The clause said—

> "When trustees hold any property wholly or mainly for the benefit of the inhabitants of a single parish or any of them ;"

and he was advised that under those words it would be quite possible for the Parish Council to appoint additional trustees to help his trustees to manage his marriage settlements. He, therefore, moved the insertion of the words "as such inhabitants," so that the clause would read—

> "When trustees hold any property wholly or mainly for the benefit of inhabitants of a single parish or any of them as such inhabitants," &c.

Amendment moved, in page 23, line 17, after ("them,") insert ("as such inhabitants.")—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : I have no objection to the Amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved an Amendment to Sub-section 2 of the Clause, providing that in the event of a charitable bequest to the parish the number of additional persons that the Parish Council might appoint under the powers of the clause to act along with the trustees of the property, should "not exceed the number of such trustees." He pointed out that the object of the Amendment was to prevent the Parish Council from swamping the existing trustees.

Amendment moved, in page 23, line 34, after ("persons,") insert ("not exceeding the number of such trustees").—(*The Marquess of Huntly.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH hoped the Amendment would be accepted, because in Scotland they were not in the same position as they were in England. This clause was one of the most contentious clauses in the English Act; and by way of compromise an Amendment was inserted to put certain powers into the hands of the Charity Commissioners. There was no body analogous to the Charity Commissioners in England, and he was not prepared to accept the Local Government Board, controlled by the Secretary for Scotland for the time being, as an equivalent.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH thought it was rather hard that the inhabitants of Scottish parishes should not be allowed to exercise a similar discretion in regard to the appointment of trustees as the inhabitants of English parishes, simply because the noble Lord had not confidence in the Scotch Local Government Board. He did not think it was the least likely that any Secretary for Scotland would sanction a scheme which would create injustice in the administration of charities in any particular parish.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH : The power given to the Parish Council was wider than in the English Act. He asked if it was wise or fair to pass a clause which had this effect: that no human being could give £500 to his nearest friend for the benefit of the inhabitants of a parish without the Parish Council coming in and putting trustees over their head ? It seemed to him bad in policy and certain to dry up other sources of benefactions. For that reason he must ask the Committee seriously to consider whether they should not have not only this Amendment, but the other one giving them the same limit as in the English Act—namely, 40 years.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he preferred his own words to those proposed by the noble Lord.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH : I will take the noble Marquess's words.

On question? their Lordships divided:—Contents 34; Not Contents 17.

On Motion of The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 23, line 35, after ("property") insert—

("as the trustees and the Parish Council may agree on in default of such agreement").

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The next Amendment I suppose the Government will treat as the last—dealing with the number of trustees.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Yes, it is consequential.

On Motion of Lord TWEEDMOUTH, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 24, line 9, after ("persons") insert ("not exceeding three").

Page 24, line 21, after the second ("shall") insert ("hold office until his successor is appointed and shall").

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The next Amendment consists of words quoted exactly from the English Act, which has been often appealed to this evening—I mean the words down to "surviving donor or donors." The other words are so obviously suited to the circumstances of Scotland that until I hear that it is so I shall not believe that this Amendment will not be accepted.

Amendment moved, in page 25, at the end of the clause, insert the following:—

"The provisions of this section with respect to the appointment of trustees shall not apply to any charity until the expiration of 40 years from the date of the foundation thereof, or, in the case of a charity founded before the passing of this Act by a donor, or by several donors, any one of whom is living at the passing of this Act, until the expiration of 40 years from the passing of this Act, unless with the consent of the surviving donor or donors. Nothing contained in this section shall apply to the funds derived from the ordinary church collections in parish churches, but such funds shall belong to and be at the disposal of the Kirk Session of each parish, and the portion of the same to be applied in relief of the poor shall be in the discretion of the Kirk Session."—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: As to the first part of the Amendment, I should be inclined to make him an appeal. He has been a distinguished member of the Commission which has had to work the Endowment Act of 1882. In that Act the limit of 10 years was put in, and a great many schemes have been dealt with under that condition. What I would suggest is that we should follow the precedent of the Endowment Act of 1882, and put in 10 years here. If he would consent to that I would accept the Amendment.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: Ten years for the past—nothing for the future?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: For the past.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The Act the noble Lord mentions undoubtedly did refer back from 1882 to 1872, but there was a special reason for that—namely, that in 1872 a very large change had been made in the educational arrangements of Scotland; therefore there was a special reason for coming down to 1872; but when that was done great care was taken to hedge round any change in administration or in the number of trustees. We were successfully appealed against more than once for having gone beyond the terms even of that limitation. But that Act is no precedent for what is asked for now, for this clause not only deals with endowments that have been given, but endowments that may be given. The modest request of the clause is that the section shall not apply to charities until the expiration of 40 years from the date of the foundation.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I will take 10 years both ways.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I am sorry I cannot accept that. I must stand to the terms of the clause. This clause is word for word the clause of the English Act passed at the end of last Session. We have had appeal after appeal to the terms of the English Act as binding on us. In some cases, such as allotments and so on, we have given in to it, but we cannot allow this Act to be pleaded against us when it is against us and disregarded when it is in our favour. On the merits this is so fair that I hope the Committee will agree to the clause. The second part of it will be taken afterwards.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Would it not be well to divide against both together?

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I had hoped that the Government would not divide against the second part of the clause. There is a Statute enacting that there shall be a weekly collection at the church doors in Scotland for the poor. The practice is a very old one, and is no doubt alluded to in various Acts of Parliament. There is a reference to it as an existing practice in an Act of 1672 and in a Proclamation of the Privy Council of 1693. That Proclamation has not been strictly adhered to, and under the Poor Law Act of 1845 there was a good deal of litigation on this matter. The Act of 1845 put the whole circumstances of the case on a different footing, and though it disfranchised the Kirk Session as those who had special charge of the poor along with the heritors, it gave the Kirk Session representation on the Parochial Board. It is proposed to do away with that. I accept it, but surely if you are going to do away with our representation you are not going to keep our money. You certainly do seem to me to be treating the Church with an extremely scant amount of courtesy and fairness. I am not contending that the representation should be maintained. I would not desire that it should be under all the new circumstances that are being brought in. But it does seem to me unfair to change a thing when it is for our disadvantage and not to give us a corresponding advantage. I am certain that if that is not done there will be a great deal of bitter litigation on the subject, and for the sake of that it is desirable that we should settle the matter once for all. There is no intention—and I think I am entitled to speak on that — on the part of the Church of Scotland or its Kirk Sessions to do anything which is unfair, but the clause in the Bill takes away every endowment we hold for the poor, and apparently you would prevent us from devoting part of our Church collections for the poor without the intervention of a Public Authority. That seems to me most unfair, and I hope that even at this late stage the Government will reconsider their decision.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he did not think the noble Lord need be under any fear that they would have any of these church-door collections to dispose of under any circumstances. It was only a small amount of the collections which went to the poor. It seemed to him that the second sub-section came under the head of change in the administration of the Poor Law, and that, therefore, the objection previously raised applied to it.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that nothing had ever astonished him more than the answer which had just been given. He would remind noble Lords that one of the ways in which the revenues of the Church of Scotland were raised was by Church-door collections. They were advised that the law was uncertain, and that if this clause was not inserted there would be litigation, and perhaps bitter litigation. He thought his case so fair and reasonable that he believed the Government would have raised no objection to it. He was surprised that the Government should oppose that which was designed in a simple way to set right what would cause a great deal of dispeace and bad feeling.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that what it came to was, that if they belonged to anybody except the Established Church they might collect as much money at the doors as they liked without being interfered with, but that if they belonged to the Established Church the money so collected would be taken away from them.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, there was nothing unintelligible in that, so long as it was an Established Church. The doctrine was that all the parishioners were entitled to the benefits of the Church's administration of money. He knew nothing about Church collections, but he could not accept the doctrine of the noble Earl that the Established Church was in respect of its funds in the same position as any other Church.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL protested against such doctrine being applied to Church-door collections, which were purely a congregational fund. They might just as well say that they could appropriate to some parochial object all the offertories in the Established Church of England. This Church-door collection in Scotland was strictly an ecclesiastical fund. Possibly when the Church represented everybody in the parish, it was for certain purposes a public fund, but it was now strictly a congregation fund. He had had no notion that this Bill contemplated the confiscation of this fund or the submitting of the management of it to any other than the members of the Church.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) explained that he had assumed that the Amendment referred to funds which, though collected at the Church door, were in some way held on trust for the parish; otherwise, they did not come within the clause at all. What was the use of putting in the section if it did not apply to these funds?

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked if it was certain that these funds were not held by a trust? Was not the minister in Kirk Session in each parish the trustee?

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that these collections were funded for the year, and were given at the end of the year in clothes, coal, and other necessaries to the poor who were not paupers. The clause in the Bill was so very wide that they ran a serious risk of having the law more against them than they had at present.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the noble Lord proposed to solve a doubt in the law in his own way. He (Lord Tweedmouth) did not think that was quite fair. What he was prepared to do was to insert words to keep things as they were—namely, that nothing in this section or in this Act should affect existing rights.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that upon that understanding, and subject to the consideration of the proposed words, he would withdraw the second paragraph of his Amendment.

On Question? their Lordships divided:—Contents 36; Not-Contents 16.

Amendment moved, in page 26, line 33, leave out from the first "the" to "Board" in line 34.

Amendment agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved, in page 30, line 41, at the end of Sub-section 3, insert—

> "Within 10 days after the date of such resolution it shall be competent for any person interested to appeal against the resolution in so far as it defines the boundaries of such special district to the Sheriff, and the Sheriff being the Sheriff Depute of the county may enlarge or limit the special district as defined by the district committee, and the decision of the Sheriff shall be final."

The Duke of Argyll

Will the noble Lord opposite accept the Amendment?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: No; I think it better that the Administrative Board should decide the matter rather than a judicial officer.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, that interference with private property was involved, and he did not think the proposal was very drastic. However, if the noble Lord would not accept the Amendment he would not press it further.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved the deletion of Clause 46, which, he said, gave additional drastic power to the Secretary for Scotland to alter parish areas. Most important questions, including valuation, depended upon parish boundaries, and it seemed to him that the clause placed a great deal too much power in the hands of an Executive Board. It gave the Secretary for Scotland power to unite parishes and alter boundaries. There was existing machinery in the County Council Act of 1889 which provided that in the case of serious opposition there should be an appeal. The clause was objected to by several large communities.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 46.—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh*).

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he was afraid he could not accept the proposal. One of the great difficulties they had was to name some ready or easy method for the adjustment of areas, and that stood in the way of the success of this Bill. The idea of going back to the cumbrous system of Provisional Orders seemed to him to be entirely out of the question. These were powers which were well administered by the Local Government Board in England, and they must insist on the power being given to the Secretary for Scotland, as the Bill proposed.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that under this clause the Secretary for Scotland would have very large powers indeed, and to him it appeared that the balance of advantage was with the clause. Unless these powers were conferred on the Secretary for

Scotland the power of altering areas would be practically inoperative altogether. This power had existed under Clause 51 of the Local Government Act, and it had scarcely ever been attempted to put it in force, the real reason of that being the expense attendant upon obtaining a Provisional Order. Just see what might happen. In the case of a parish in the neighbourhood of a large town if there was any proposal to alter the area it could not be carried out without a very expensive appeal to Parliament. If this power extended to matters Parliamentary he certainly would not give such power to the Secretary for Scotland. Parliamentary and ecclesiastical matters were withheld from the clause. There was a reference in the last line but one to Sections 95 and 96 of the principal Act. Therefore, as it simply related to local matters, on the whole he thought it better to take the cheaper and more efficient course.

Amendment negatived.

Clause agreed to.

On Motion of Lord TWEEDMOUTH, the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Page 34, line 23, leave out ("eleventh day of December"), and insert ("fifteenth day of May in the year").

Line 24, leave out ("ninety-four"), and insert ("ninety-five").

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY moved the following proviso:—

"Provided that in the case of the medical officers holding office under this Act and the former Acts, any arrangement as to their duties and remuneration shall be subject to the approval of the Local Government Board."

He thought those who had had experience of local matters in Scotland knew that it was necessary in some way to protect medical officers from dismissal without some appeal. He had known cases where injustice had been done owing to local feeling, and it was necessary that there should be some appeal against the decision of the Parish Council. In the case of medical officers under the Board of Supervision there was an appeal at the present moment, he believed. He desired to make a verbal alteration in the Amendment—namely, to substitute the word "resolution" for "arrangement."

Amendment moved, in page 34, line 38, after ("passed") insert—

("Provided that in the case of the medical officers holding office under this Act and the former Acts, any resolution as to their duties and remuneration shall be subject to the approval of the Local Government Board.")

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, he did not think there was any great objection to the Amendment, though he did not quite like the form of it. He should prefer words to the effect that any rearrangement of the duties and remuneration of a medical officer holding office under the Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845, should be subjected to the approval of the Board.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: Does that give an appeal in case of dismissal?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: That is equally outside the noble Marquess's Amendment and mine.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY: Not with the word "resolution."

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I prefer my own words.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

On Motion of Lord TWEEDMOUTH the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 34, line 38, after "passed," insert—

"Provided that any rearrangement of the duties and remuneration of the existing medical officers holding office under the Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1845, shall be subject to the approval of the Local Government Board."

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved to add to the clause a proviso to the effect that in all matters relating to the Poor Law administration the Inspector of Poor should act as clerk to the Parish Council. The Inspectors of the Poor were well known in Scotland, and it was acknowledged that they discharged their onerous and difficult duties with a great deal of tact and efficiency. Under some clauses of the Bill they were being rather hardly treated. He would not go the length of some of their number and propose that in all cases they should act as clerk to the Parish Council. He would not advocate that, but it seemed to him that in matters so strictly within their province as the administration of the poor if they were not made clerks to the

Parish Council a great deal of difficulty and friction would take place. They would have two officers where one would do, certainly in all rural parishes.

Amendment moved, in page 35, line 2, after ("Council"), insert—

("Provided always that in all matters relating to the Poor Law administration, the Inspector of Poor shall act as clerk to the Parish Council.")—(*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

***Lord TWEEDMOUTH** thought the Amendment would fetter too much the power of the Parish Council. The Parish Council should have the right to select their own clerk, and his Amendment would secure the existing officer from any hardship or grievance. He would propose to amend the clause by providing that—

"If any existing Inspector of Poor is aggrieved by such distribution of business, or by the imposition or withdrawal of any duties, he may within one month after the date of any resolution of the Council distributing such business, or imposing or withdrawing such duties, appeal to the Board, whose decision shall be final."

He believed that those words would amply secure the existing officers from any hardship or grievance.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said, the administration of the Poor Law was very technical, and in some respects a difficult matter. His proposal, if carried out, would be greatly valued by the Inspectors of the Poor themselves. In the position of clerk they would be able to advise the Parish Councils and give those bodies the benefit of their experience and knowledge of Poor Law administration. No doubt the Government were supreme in this matter, and if the Amendment were inserted here, if the Government were hostile to it, it would be rejected elsewhere. He put it on the grounds of equity to the Inspectors and efficiency in the administration of the law.

Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, he was afraid he must persist in his objection.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, that no doubt under the Amendment of Lord Balfour of Burleigh the Poor Law would be administered in the most efficient manner. It stood to reason that the Inspector of the Poor would be the best clerk for dealing with Poor Law matters. If anyone else were appointed the first thing he would have to do would be to set to work to learn the Poor Law. At the same time, the Government proposal would give the Inspector of the Poor an appeal if he felt himself aggrieved.

Amendment negatived.

On Motion of Lord Tweedmouth the following Amendment was agreed to:—

Page 35, line 2, after ("Council") insert—

("Provided that if any existing Inspector of Poor is aggrieved by such distribution of business, or by the imposition or withdrawal of any duties, he may, within one month after the date of any resolution of the Council distributing such business or imposing or withdrawing such duties, appeal to the Board, whose decision shall be final.")

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH moved an Amendment to add the following words at the end of the clause:—

"Provided always that, on the retirement of an Inspector of Poor, the Parish Council may, with the consent of the Board, grant to such Inspector a superannuation allowance not exceeding two-thirds of his existing salary and emoluments."

The Poor Law officers in England and Ireland were entitled to superannuation, and it was not fair or just that the Poor Law officers in Scotland should be debarred from the privilege. That they were so debarred had long been felt by them to be a real grievance, and especially so now, when they entertained a strong feeling that their positions would be unfavourably affected by this Bill. He asked for no special or exceptional treatment on behalf of the Poor Law officers of Scotland, but simply that their claims in this matter might be impartially considered.

Amendment moved, in page 35, line 11, at end of clause, insert—

("Provided always that, on the retirement of an Inspector of Poor, the Parish Council may, with the consent of the Board, grant to such Inspector a superannuation allowance not exceeding two-thirds of his existing salary and emoluments.") — (*The Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

***Lord TWEEDMOUTH** said, this was an Amendment dealing with money. The Leader of the Opposition had given the House some advice as to their action in regard to matters arising out of the rates, and besides, the Amendment was ruled out of Order by the Speaker of the House of Commons as not coming within the scope of the Bill. Moreover, when that Amendment was divided upon in the Scotch Grand Committee only 13 voted in its favour, while 43 voted against it. It could hardly be said, therefore, that there was a very strong feeling in favour of introducing the proposal in this Bill. He thought it would be undesirable, in the interests of the officers themselves as well as in those of the Parish Councils, to press the Amendment.

Amendment negatived.

On Motion of Lord Tweedmouth the following Amendments were agreed to:—

Clause 54 amended, so as to provide that the expression "Town Clerk" includes the clerk to the Burgh Commissioners of a police burgh.

Page 37, at the end of clause, insert—

("the expression 'district committee of a County Council' shall include a County Council sitting as a district committee under Sub-section 3 of Section 78 of the principal Act.")

Page 40, line 25, insert—

52 & 53 Vict. c. 50.	Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889.	Section twenty-eight sub-section (2), (i), the words "who is not married, or who being married is not living in family with her husband."	The commencement of this Act.
44 Vict. c. 13.	Municipal Elections Amendment (Scotland) Act, 1881.	Section two, the words "who are not married, and married females not living in family with their husbands."	

Other Amendments agreed to.

On Motion of Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Clause 55 was amended, in order to provide that

("the expression 'district committee of a County Council' shall include a County Council sitting as a district committee under Sub-section 3 of Section 78 of the principal Act."

*The Marquess of LOTHIAN asked when the remaining stages of the Bill would be taken?

Lord TWEEDMOUTH said that, if the Report stage and the Third Reading were taken to-morrow, the Bill could be sent to the Commons and then dealt with in the Lords again on Monday.

The Report of the Amendments to be received To-morrow; and Standing Order No. XXXIX. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 212.)

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 2) (BRIDGEWATER, &c. CANALS) BILL.—(No. 185.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 9) (CANALS OF CALEDONIAN AND NORTH BRITISH RAILWAY COMPANIES) BILL.—(No. 190.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

CANAL RATES, TOLLS, AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 11) (GRAND CANAL, &c.) BILL.—(No. 191.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [H.L.]—(No. 178.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

QUARRIES BILL [H.L.]—(No. 149.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments to be considered To-morrow.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [H.L.]

Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 11.) (LAGAN, &c. CANALS) BILL, *now* CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 10.) (LAGAN, &c. CANALS) BILL. (No. 197.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) (BIRMINGHAM CANAL) BILL.—(No. 198.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

CANAL TOLLS AND CHARGES PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 6) (RIVER LEE, &c.) BILL.—(No. 211.)

Moved, That the Order made on the 19th day of March last,

> "That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 26th day of June next,"

be dispensed with, and that the Bill be read 2ª; agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 202.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; Amendments made; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 215.)

JURIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 216.)

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 217.)

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow. (No. 218.)

PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO CHILDREN BILL [H.L.]

Commons Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 16th August 1894.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

VON ROEMER'S RESUMPTION OF BRITISH NATIONALITY BILL [*Lords*] (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, he did not rise to object to the Second Reading of the Bill, but to express the opinion that some steps should be taken to alter the law so that parties would not be exposed to the great cost of Private Naturalisation Bills, and the time of Parliament would not be wasted on them. The Naturalisation Act of 1870 provided for naturalisation in the case of married women and widows, but did not take cognisance of such cases as that arising under this particular Bill—namely, the case of a person who had been divorced. Though there might be some doubt in the case—though it might be held in certain quarters that the Act applied to such a case—there was certainly an omission in the Act which should be repaired by general legislation. That would have the effect of preventing these purely private matters from being brought forward in the House.

MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon) said, he would ask the Home Secretary what was the reason for the Bill? They were entitled to some explanation, seeing that the Naturalisation Act of 1870 was passed to put the law on this subject on a sound and intelligible footing. He believed that the last time a question of naturalisation was before the House the then Home Secretary said that the Bill must be regarded entirely as an exceptional matter. He was not prepared to say that the right hon. Gentleman had declared that there never should be a Private Bill of this nature again, but that there should not be one except in a very special case. The lady in this case was entitled to the sympathy of the House. It appeared that she was born an English subject in Lambeth, in the County of Surrey; that she married a Baron Von Roemer; that by reason of his misconduct she was compelled to divorce him; that she then married another German gentleman, and by reason of his misconduct was obliged to divorce him also. Under the circumstances, no one could wonder that the lady desired to resume her nationality, and to cease to belong to the nationality of either of her husbands. He should like to know why it was necessary to have special legislation to meet the case, and why the Act of 1870 had failed?

Mr COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin) said, that some four years ago he had called attention to the Naturalisation Law, and had expressed considerable doubt as to whether these Bills ought to be sanctioned by Parliament. By the Act of 1870 procedure was laid down for acquiring English nationality, or resuming it, and it was open to grave doubt whether these Private Bills should be allowed. By their means parties obtained naturalisation much more easily than they could under the ordinary law. The Home Secretary of that day came to the conclusion that Private Bills should be allowed where they were for the public interest, but that so far as they were desired to suit private convenience they should be no longer allowed. Therefore, when he (Mr. Courtney) had seen this Bill in the Order Paper on Monday he had taken the liberty of getting it postponed so that it should be taken by Order. It appeared that the circumstances of this case were peculiar. The lady concerned was born in London of British parents. She married in Stuttgart, Würtemberg, a German gentleman, whom she had to divorce, and subsequently she married another German gentleman in Bavaria, whom she also divorced. She had been discharged from her nationality in Würtemburg on condition that she made her domicile in some country outside the German Empire. There was some doubt as to whether she could not resume her British nationality under the Act of 1870, but the highest authorities thought that the Act did not apply to divorced women. It made no reference to such cases, though married women and widows were referred to. The present Bill, however, would immediately on its passing into law confer all the rights and privileges of British nationality; while the Act of 1870 made the resumption conditional on a residence of five years, and on satisfactory evidence being produced to the Home Secretary as to character. He did not think they should allow this acceleration to occur. They should treat this lady as if she had been a widow or a German spinster who desired to acquire English nationality. Under the peculiar circumstances, he thought the Bill might be allowed to pass, if it could be so amended in Committee as to make the conditions of resumption similar to those in the Act of 1870. He admitted that if the case were admissible it ought to be provided for in the general law. But an amendment of the general law would be a long time coming, although he should like to see it effected in order to prevent the recurrence of Bills of this kind in the future.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): I think the House is very much indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin for the steps he has taken in connection with this Bill. It certainly would be most undesirable that a Bill of this character should have been allowed to pass through this House without some notice being taken of the grounds upon which this lady asks for special legislation in relation to her case. As the Minister who is responsible for the administration of the general law of naturalisation, I desire to reiterate the expressions of opinion of my predecessors in Office to the effect that, inasmuch as Parliament has laid down a general scheme of law under which a person alien born can become naturalised, good grounds must be shown before the House can sanction any measure dealing exceptionally with any particular case. If it can be shown that this is a case which might have been dealt with under the ordinary law, I agree with my right hon. Friend that the House ought not to sanction the Second Reading of the Bill. The question, however, arises whether this particular case, which is, I believe, without precedent, and one not likely to occur again in the future, does come under the general law. I confess that I think it does, and that there is nothing in the 10th section of the Act of 1870 which ought to be regarded as cutting down the general terms of the 7th and 8th sections. But different opinions are maintained in other quarters which are entitled to the highest possible respect. It must, therefore, be conceded to be at least doubtful whether the lady, who is not a spinster, and yet is not a widow, can under the provisions of the general law resume her British nationality under the general conditions of the Act of 1870. The case of this lady, therefore, is one of hardship, and in default of the amendment of the general law—and the time of the House cannot now be occupied with the amendment of the general law—special legislation seemed the only way to get rid of this lady's hardship. Therefore, although I with some reluctance assent to the Second Reading, it must be clearly understood that a clause shall be inserted in Committee, providing that the Act shall not take effect unless and until the conditions prescribed by the Act of 1870 in relation to everybody else as to residence and otherwise are satisfied by this lady. I think it is most desirable that we should insist on a uniform law in relation to these matters, and that this antiquated and vicious system of proceeding by way of special legislation should never be tolerated unless in very exceptional cases.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. MELLOR, York, W.R., Sowerby) thought it would be very undesirable that this lady by special legislation should be placed in a more favourable position than if she were a widow, and should have any advantages not enjoyed by other persons. He entirely approved of the course suggested by the Home Secretary, and if a clause of the nature referred to were inserted he should offer no objection to the Bill.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Asquith

Bill read a third time, and committed.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 211 and 236 be suspended, and that the Committee have leave to sit and proceed forthwith.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. MELLOR) said, he begged to move the alterations in the Standing Orders down in his name on the Paper. The object was to secure that notice should be given to every person who was affected by any Bill brought in containing what was known as a Betterment Clause, or a clause affecting his land or property. These alterations would bring the Standing Orders of the House into conformity with those of the House of Lords.

Standing Order 3 was read and amended in line 15 by inserting, after the word "privileges," the words "or to impose on any lands or houses, or to render any lands or houses liable to the imposition of any special charge in respect of any improvement."

New Standing Order, to follow Standing Order 12:—

(Notice to owners, &c., in case of improvement charge.)

12A. Ordered, on or before the 15th day of December immediately preceding the application for a Bill by which any special charge is imposed upon any lands or houses, or any lands or houses are rendered liable to have a special charge imposed upon them in connection with any improvement, notice in writing shall be given to the owners or reputed owners, lessees or reputed lessees, and occupiers of all such lands and houses of such proposed special charge or liability.

Ordered, That the said Order be a Standing Order of the House.

Standing Order 24 was read and amended in line 5 by inserting, after the word "taken," the words "and in the case of all Bills by which any special charge is imposed upon any lands or houses, or any lands or houses are rendered liable to have a special charge imposed upon them in connection with any improvement."

Standing Order 33 was read and amended in page 45, line 15, by inserting, after the word "Board," the words "or to which Standing Order 38 applies."

Standing Order 46 was read and amended in line 4 by inserting, after the word "plan," the words "or upon which any special charge is imposed, or which are rendered liable to have a special charge imposed upon them in connection with any improvement."

Standing Order 60A was read and amended in line 10 by inserting, after the word

"Bridges," the words "and of every Bill to which Standing Order 38 applies."

Standing Order 63 was read and amended :—

In line 1, by leaving out the words "and empowering or requiring," and inserting the words "promoted by."

In line 7, by inserting, after the word "applies," the words "or empowering or requiring any such company, society, association, or co-partnership, not being the Promoters of the Bill."

Standing Order 166A was read and amended in line 6 by inserting, after the word "train," the words "exceeding 56 lbs. in weight."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) asked if the alterations applied to the Standing Orders generally, or only for the Session ?

THE CHAIRMAN : Generally.

MR. BARTLEY pointed out that, while the Government would not agree to the appointment of a Joint Committee of both Houses to inquire into the question of betterment, they were now accepting the recommendation of the Committee of the other House.

*THE CHAIRMAN said, the alterations by the House of Lords Committee of the Standing Orders of the Lords were made after the Report of the Lords Committee.

MR. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he hoped there would be no opposition to such a reasonable proposition. In the event of betterment proposals being made, it was desirable that due notice should be given to the persons concerned.

QUESTIONS.

THE IMPORTATION OF GERMAN PRISON-MADE GOODS.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when the Report long since received by the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin upon the importation of German prison-made goods to compete with free British labour is to be published, and brought to the knowledge of the operatives in the brush trade, the whip trade, and other industries suffering, in their opinion, from the illicit competition of foreign convicts ; and if he has personally communicated with the commissioner of *The Hardwareman* journal despatched to inquire into this traffic, whose sworn testimony has been submitted to him, or done anything whatever in the matter ?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) : As I informed my hon. Friend in answer to a question of his towards the end of last month, the Report received from Her Majesty's Representative at Berlin regarding goods made in German prisons will be published as soon as the other Reports relating to the same subject, including that expected from France, have been received, and I hope that these further Reports will very soon arrive. As regards the second paragraph of the question, the inquiries made upon this subject have been made, as is always the case, through the Diplomatic Service of Her Majesty, that being the authorised channel for obtaining information from foreign countries, and no communications have been made to the Press or private agencies in the matter.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT : Has the right hon. Gentleman made any inquiry into this matter personally, or have the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Customs, seeing the great interest taken in it in all parts of the world, where British trade is found ?

MR. BRYCE : I do not think it proper that I should make any inquiry of that nature.

FRAUDULENTLY-MARKED CHISELS.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether 6,000 cast steel Firmer chisels coming from Germany were recently seized by the Customs House at Leith, by reason of the word Sheffield being engraved thereon, and were subsequently sold by public auction under the Royal Arms and Cypher, thereby supplying the Leith and Edinburgh market with chisels for some time to come, and, in such a case, if he can state who were the exporters and the importers of these contraband goods, and what steps have been taken in respect of them ; and what was the sum realised by this Government auction, and if it can be sent to the Mayor of Sheffield for distribution among the Societies succouring the unemployed in the edge tool and cutlery trade ?

MR. BRYCE : The Commissioners of Customs inform the Board of Trade that the chisels referred to—valued at £30—were imported from Hamburg to Leith in September last year. They were contained in packages bearing two labels with English wording, one qualified as to the foreign origin of the goods and the other not, but the chisels themselves were stamped "warranted cast steel" without qualification, and were accordingly retained as a seizure, as is usual in the case of the importation of foreign-made hardware so marked. The goods were sold at the recent Customs sale at Leith, the illegal marks being first removed therefrom, and realised £25 4s. This account has been carried to the account of the Crown, and cannot be dealt with in any other manner. It is not the practice of the Commissioners of Customs to divulge the names of either the consignors or consignees, or to take any action beyond seizure.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: Has any notice been taken of it with regard to the importers?

MR. BRYCE: I am not aware of any action being taken. As I have informed the hon. Member, this is a matter for the Commissioners of Customs and not for the Board of Trade.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: But is not the administration of the Merchandise Marks Act under the Board of Trade, and was not the seizure effected under a clause of that Act?

MR. BRYCE: No, Sir; the seizure was made by the Commissioners of Customs. It is for them to carry out this particular Act.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I will call attention to this matter on the Estimates?

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to initiate a prosecution under the Merchandise Marks Act?

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness): Who is responsible for answering questions on this subject?

MR. BRYCE: I am responsible. But these seizures were made by the Commissioners of Customs, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury has to answer questions for that body.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my question.

MR. BRYCE: I should think the hon. Member never expected an answer to it.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Yes, I did. I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, as he is responsible, he will see that a prosecution is instituted?

MR. BRYCE: I have said that this matter does not relate entirely to the Board of Trade; it also affects the Commissioners of Customs, and I cannot answer questions in regard to it without consulting them.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: Was any communication sent by the Commissioners of the seizure of falsely-marked chisels, and, if so, what action was taken upon it?

MR. BRYCE: If my hon. and gallant Friend likes to put down any further question with regard to the different steps taken in this matter I will endeavour to obtain the information. But I must remind him that he is asking as to something which is not in the question on the Paper.

BRITISH SOLDIERS AND THE PLAGUE AT HONG KONG.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the voluntary and gallant services of the 1st Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry Regiment during the plague at Hong Kong; if no less than 400 soldiers were employed in the cleaning work in the plague-stricken parts of that town, and the removal of the refuse and filth from the dwellings owing to the natives refusing to work; if one of the officers of that regiment, Captain Vesey, and many of the soldiers were attacked by the plague, and the former succumbed to that terrible disease, sacrificing his life to save the rest of the inhabitants from the plague; and whether any steps have been taken, or are practical, to recognise the gallant services of the 1st Battalion Shropshire Light Infantry (late 58th Regiment) performed during the continuance of the plague in Hong Kong?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. WOODALL, Hanley) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State explained to the House on July 3 the circumstances which rendered necessary the use of troops in the manner referred to by the hon. Member. Eight officers and over 300 men of the Shropshire Light Infantry and detachments of the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers volunteered to assist the Civil Authorities at Hong Kong in cleansing and disinfecting houses in which cases of plague had occurred. Of these volunteers one officer (Captain Vesey) and five men were attacked by the plague, and I regret to say that Captain Vesey and one of the men died. The Commander-in-Chief's appreciation of the gallant services of these men who volunteered for this duty has already been conveyed to the General Officer commanding. A copy of a Despatch has been received through the Colonial Office from the Governor of Hong Kong expressing his appreciation of the valuable assistance he has received in this crisis from the naval and military forces. I am sure that the House and the country generally will join in admiration of this fresh instance of the gallantry and devotion which always characterise Her Majesty's soldiers and sailors.

THE TREATMENT OF FIRST OFFENDERS.

COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if, having regard to the fact that although 10,393 persons have been saved from prison under the provisions of the probation of the First Offenders Act between 1888 and 1893, in the six districts of the Metropolis, the West Riding, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Durham, and that only 938, or less than 10 per cent., of these have been called upon to appear and receive judgment, or are known to have been subsequently convicted of a fresh offence, two Metropolitan Police Courts and several places have failed altogether to put the Act into operation, or to avail themselves of the powers conferred by the Summary Jurisdiction Act in a similar direction, he will consider the advisability of re-issuing the Circular of his predecessor, reminding Criminal Courts of the Statute, in the hope that they may utilise it still further, and thereby save the country from the maintenance of many persons in prison, and at the same time reclaim considerable numbers to honest society?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I am anxious, with a view to mitigate the treatment of those who commit trifling offences, that Justices should fully avail themselves of both the Probation of First Offenders Act and the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, s. 16; and I am considering whether any further action should be taken by the Home Office for that purpose.

LABOURERS' COTTAGES IN THE EDENDERRY UNION.

MR. KENNEDY (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state what steps, if any, the Guardians of the Edenderry Union have taken to carry out the order for the erection of 22 labourers' cottages in their Union published by the Local Government Board on the 17th of February last, and confirmed by an Order in the Privy Council on the 22nd of June; and will he cause the Local Government Board to urge the Guardians to make contracts for the erection of those cottages before the winter sets in?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): I am informed that the necessary plans and schedules are now being prepared by the Guardians for deposit with the Board of Works, Clerk of Union, and Clerk of Peace. An Arbitrator will then be nominated by the Board of Works, and his appointment has to be advertised for three weeks, and a further period of not less than three weeks allowed to parties interested to make statements of claim. The Guardians have no power to enter on lands until after the deposit of the Arbitrator's draft award, and the Local Government Board could not, therefore, urge them to make contracts for the erection of cottages before that date. The Board add, they see no reason to anticipate any unnecessary delay on the part of the Guardians in their proceedings under the Order.

DANGEROUS RIFLE RANGES.

MR. WILSON LLOYD (Wednesbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the sad fatal accident at Tipton, to a child of Mr. Henn, who was killed by a stray bullet from the Dudley Rifle Range while standing at the door of his father's house; if he will state what measures will be adopted to prevent such accidents in the future at this range and other similar ranges in the country; and if the War Department will grant help to Mr. Henn to relieve him from the expense that has been inflicted upon him by this accident, amounting to £60, which is far beyond his power to pay?

Mr. WOODALL (who replied) said: The attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the very sad accident at Tipton to a child of a Mr. Henn, who was killed by a stray bullet from the Dudley Rifle Range while standing at the door of his father's house. To prevent such accidents in future, firing on this Volunteer range has been prohibited, a course which is always adopted when a range is found to be unsafe. With regard to the loss that has been inflicted on Mr. Henn, I can only repeat the answer given by the Secretary of State on the 18th of June on this subject—namely, that there does not seem to be any claim against the Government in this matter, whatever other claim there may be.

Mr. WILSON LLOYD: Arising out of that answer, is it not a fact that this range was complained of in the year 1892 by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood; that an inspection was made by order of the War Department and that it was pronounced safe? Have not the War Office thus made themselves liable to give some gratuity to this poor man to meet the expense he has incurred and which he cannot afford?

*Mr. WOODALL: I am afraid I am not able to answer as to the particular facts alleged. We are satisfied that the man has no remedy as against the War Office. If the hon. Member cares to put a further question down I will look into it.

Mr. WILSON LLOYD: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the second paragraph of my question.

*Mr. WOODALL: Whenever there is reason to suppose that a range is insecure, an investigation will be made and firing prohibited if necessary.

CATHOLICS ON THE IRISH MAGISTRACY.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): In the absence of the hon. Member for West Kerry, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give the date of the last Catholic appointment to the Bench in the Dingle district; and whether there is any likelihood of any Catholic appointments to the Magistracy being made there?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Since the present Government came into Office 29 County Magistrates have been appointed in Kerry, of whom 19 are believed to be Roman Catholics. Two gentlemen were appointed for duty at the Dingle Petty Sessions; one of them, appointed in March, 1893, is a Roman Catholic, and the other, appointed lately, is a Protestant. The Lord Chancellor will be glad to consider the names of any suitable Roman Catholic gentlemen that may be recommended to him for the Commission.

THE STRABANE VOTING LISTS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on Monday, 13th August, the clerk of Strabane Union, North Tyrone, refused to allow John Torish, the Nationalist registration agent, who is a ratepayer, access to the Rate Collector's Returns, to ascertain if the Franchise Laws had been complied with by certain voters; whether he is aware that the majority in this division in 1892 was only 51; will he inquire why the following Conservatives, whose rates were not paid in time in 1893, were not officially objected to, and appear on the 1894 Register: Nos. 1,323, William Mackey; 1,678, J. Thompson; 217, J. Hill (in succession, rates unpaid on house in Castle Street); 232, John Jack (in succession, rates unpaid on Castle Street house); why two Nationalists, D. Gallagher and George Knox, Nos. 156 and 265 on the supplemental and inhabitant occupiers' lists, living in houses under £4, received no notice that the landlord had not paid the rates; whether the landlord also got no notice; and whether these men were, in consequence, officially objected to, and struck off the lists; and whether, as the Local Government Board declare it is not the duty of the Strabane Poor Law officials to know or act on the decision of the Court of Appeal on the Registration Law, they will ascertain on what ground the following Nationalists have been officially objected to by the clerk in the preparation of the Register for 1895: Nos. 146, Samuel Brown; 155, Thomas Brown; 280, Hugh Coyle; 991, J. M'Bride?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am informed that permission to inspect the documents mentioned was refused to Mr. Torish on the 15th instant, and to Mr. Miller, the Unionist registration agent, on the 14th instant. The clerk of the Union reports that he so refused because the period of 14 days prescribed for inspection by Section 18 of the Registration Act of 1885 had expired before the first of those dates; that he did not think he had any right to allow the inspection asked for; and that the Guardians approved of his conduct in refusing. The majority in this division in 1892 was 49. I am informed that all rates, for which the first three persons mentioned in the second paragraph were liable, were duly paid, and that there was no person named John Jack, of Castle Street, on the lists. I am informed that Daniel Gallagher was not officially objected to for unpaid rates, but that he was so objected to and struck off the list for having received outdoor relief, and that there was no official objection to George Knox. The Local Government Board state that they are not aware that they made such a statement as that referred to in the last paragraph. The statement to which my hon. and learned Friend personally refers is that made in reply to a question addressed to me on the 3rd instant, that I had been informed it does not devolve upon the Local Government Board to make clerks of Unions acquainted with the Registration Law, or to see that it is carried out, and that the Board had no jurisdiction over Boards of Guardians and clerks of Unions in their capacity of "Overseers" under the Franchise Acts. I am informed that Samuel Brown was objected to for subletting, and the other persons for not being sole occupiers under the decision of the Court of Appeal in Simpson's case.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Do I understand the clerk is justified in refusing access when Nationalists are concerned, and with allowing it to Tories?

Commander BETHELL: Is it not an objectionable course for the Government to inquire into the political opinions of voters?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Local Government Board did not enter into the question as to whether these voters were Conservatives or Nationalists. The question was as to certain numbers on the Registers.

Mr. ROSS (Londonderry): Is there any foundation for the charge against the clerk of this Union?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I cannot say I see any foundation for a charge of improper conduct.

Lord F. HAMILTON (Tyrone, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the clerk's action was approved by the Guardians, the majority of whom are Nationalists?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The majority of them are Tories.

Mr. J. MORLEY: I have no information as to that.

POACHERS SHOT BY GAMEKEEPERS AT DERRY.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the fact that last Thursday, near Draperstown, County Derry, two men were shot by gamekeepers; one was Bernard M'Eldowney, whose leg is shattered by a bullet from a Martini-Henry; the other, Patrick M'Guiggan, whose foot was smashed so that it will probably have to be amputated; and that the two gamekeepers, Deane, and Lees, were arrested, but released on £100 bail by Mr. C. W. Dysart, J.P.; whether he is aware that the Magistrate shook hands with the prisoner, Deane, before the inquiry; whether it is usual to release prisoners, especially on such small bail, when serious injury has been inflicted; if not, will the Lord Chancellor's attention be called to the circumstance; did the police resist bail; was the Crown professionally represented; and what is the present condition of the wounded men?

Mr. J. MORLEY: My attention has been drawn to a report of the occurrence referred to in the first paragraph. Each of the wounded men, who were poachers, was armed with a double-barrelled gun, and both of them fired the first shot at one of the gamekeepers, who, however, was not struck. They were shortly afterwards fired upon by Deane. One was seriously injured in the left leg, and the other in the left foot. The gamekeepers were arrested and charged with shooting at the poachers, and at the hearing of the case the Magistrate named took bail for their appearance at the next Petty Sessions. The Crown was not professionally represented at the hearing, but the District Inspector of Police conducted the proceedings and opposed bail being taken. I understand it is not usual to release prisoners on bail when serious injury has been inflicted, but it does not appear that the action of the Magistrate was illegal in the present case. I am making further inquiry into the matter, however. The police are unable to say whether the Magistrate shook hands with one of the prisoners before the inquiry, as alleged. The wounded men are improving, and no amputation, so I am told, will be necessary.

PARLIAMENTARY INDICES.

Mr. H. J. WILSON (York, W.R., Holmfirth): In the absence of the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division of Nottingham, I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury who is responsible for making up the indices to the Evidence given before the Select Committees of this House; and whether witnesses before such Committees are permitted to have any share in making up or correction of proofs of such indices after they are set up by the printers?

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Sir J. T. Hibbert, Oldham): I am informed that the index to the Evidence given before a Select Committee is prepared by the printers, Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, who are responsible for the same. Witnesses have no share in making up or correcting proofs of such index.

TELEGRAPH FACILITIES IN TIPPERARY.

Mr. MANDEVILLE (Tipperary, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General is he aware that the people of Ardfinnan and of Bansha, County Tipperary, want to have postal telegraph offices established at both those places, and that they have applied to the Post Office authorities to facilitate them; if he is aware that the telegraph wires are already fixed up in Bansha, but that there is no telegraphic communication between those wires and the local post office adjoining; is he aware that the telegraph wires of the Waterford and Limerick Railway are about five miles off Ardfinnan Post Office; and will he give postal telegraphic offices at Ardfinnan and at Bansha?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.): It is the fact that applications have been received for the establishment of telegraph offices at Ardfinnan and Bansha Post Offices. I regret to find that in neither case is the extension likely to prove remunerative; and I am therefore precluded by Treasury Regulations from affording the desired facilities except under guarantee, the amount of which in each case I will communicate to the hon. Member. The wires to which the hon. Member refers in the case of Bansha are through wires, which are not available for serving that office. It would be necessary to erect a new wire from Bansha Post Office to Tipperary. The hon. Member is probably aware that the guarantee might be given by the Local Authority.

POLICE BARRACKS IN TIPPERARY.

Mr. MANDEVILLE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that, in reference to the contemplated abolition of certain police barracks in the County Tipperary, the ratepayers, who pay for them, are of opinion the least useful police barracks are those that should be abolished; and that great discontent exists there because Ballydavid Police Barrack has not been abolished instead of Kilmoyler Police Barrack; has he seen on the Ordnance Map of that county the relative positions of both places; will he inquire further into the reasons why Kilmoyler Barrack was selected for abolition, instead of the less useful one at Ballydavid; and will he see that the ratepayers' views of this important matter are represented to the Constabulary Authorities in Dublin Castle?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The breaking up of one or more police stations in the county became necessary in consequence of a recent reduction in the police establishment of the county. It became a question whether the station at Ballydavid or Kilmoyler should be broken up, and the Divisional Commissioner and local officers agreed that Kilmoyler station was the least useful of the two and could better be dispensed with. Certain of the ratepayers of the locality, who objected to the abolition of Kilmoyler, did lay their views before the Constabulary Authorities, and their representations were carefully considered before the surrender of the barrack was recommended. All the correspondence in the matter was before Govenment, who expressed concurrence in the recommendation of the Local Authorities.

THE POLICE AND IRISH LAND DISPUTES.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that District Inspector Cosgrave, Kanturk, had two colts grazing on an evicted farm at Toureen, Knocknagree, from which a tenant named Mahony was evicted; and that the same police officer removed the colts to another evicted farm at Ardnaguta, from which a tenant named O'Connell was evicted; is he aware that the colts were attended to by the caretakers, who are under police protection; and whether the Constabulary Authorities sanctioned the action of this officer in thus intervening in a matter of dispute between landlord and tenant?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The facts, I am informed, are substantially as stated in the question. The sending of the horses to graze on the evicted farms is stated to have been an ordinary business transaction, and Mr. Cosgrave had no intention of intervening in the matter in the sense imputed in the question. At the same time, I consider that this action was imprudent, and open to this latter construction, having regard to his position as a police officer, and I shall so inform the Inspector General.

Mr. ROSS: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to lay it down that the Constabulary should take part in the boycotting of farms?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The hon. and learned Gentleman must know that I mean to lay down nothing of the kind. I consider that in this case the officer did what was not his duty, and his superior officer has been so informed.

Mr. ROSS: In what has this officer done wrong? How has he transgressed the law?

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): Has he violated any regulation of the Royal Irish Constabulary?

Mr. J. MORLEY: There are many things an officer may do which are indiscreet, but are not mentioned in the Queen's Regulations, and when such cases are brought to the notice of the Irish Government, it is their duty to investigate them and, if necessary, reprimand the officer.

Mr. FLYNN: Does not the Constabulary Code prohibit a policeman taking a farm in the neighbourhood of his own station?

[No answer was given.]

OUTDOOR OFFICERS OF CUSTOMS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the existing Regulations which enable persons serving in the Civil Service and other specified situations to compete at the examinations for outdoor officers of Customs will continue in force as at present until the contemplated change of age takes place?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: Clause 4 of the General Regulations for open competitive examinations for the Civil Service, by which persons who have served for two full consecutive years in any civil situation to which they were admitted with the certificate of the Civil Service Commissioners may, in reckoning age for competition, deduct from their actual age any time not exceeding five years which they may have spent in such service, continues in force, and will so continue under the new Regulations.

THE SOUTH MEATH VOTERS' LISTS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in addition to the allegations already made affecting the South Meath Register of Voters, he will inquire whether the following persons were struck off the 1893 Register by having their names scored through by the Revising Barrister, yet that they appear in the 1894 list—namely, Polling District of Dunboyne: Nos. 53, Carlin, John, Boolies, labourer's house (not living there for several years); 217, Larkin, Michael, Dunboyne, labourer's house (dead several years); 245, Martin, Michael, Clonee (dead many years); 15, Blackburn, John, Dunboyne (dead several years); Polling District of Athboy; Nos. 44, Byrne, Henry, Athboy; 90, Clarke, Michael, Jamestown; 446, Masterson, Michael, Baskinagh Upper (struck off last year as Thomas); 459, Miggin, John, Kildalkey; 488, Mulvey, Bartle, Kildalkey; 511, Murtagh, John, Castletown; 514, Murtagh, Patrick, Castletown; 393, Lawless, Peter, Martinstown (not on last year's list nor premises for many years); if he will ask the Revising Barrister whether he authorised the insertion of these names in the 1894 list; and, if not, what authority the Clerk of the Peace had to re-insert them; and if, having regard to the very many serious allegations affecting this list, the Lord Chancellor will inquire into the conduct of the Clerk of the Peace?

MR. J. MORLEY: I have received a long and elaborate answer, and I would rather in the first place make it a matter of private communication to the hon. and learned Member, who, when he has seen it, can, if he is not satisfied, put a further question down.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I have put to the right hon. Gentleman a whole series of questions regarding these lists. Serious allegations have been made affecting this gentleman. The majority in the Division was only 50, and many more than 50 names are concerned. Will the right hon. Gentleman consider if he should allow these allegations to pass without an investigation by some competent authority?

MR. J. MORLEY: Before answering that question I should be glad if the hon. Member, for mine as well as his own information, will go through the list of names submitted to me by the Clerk of the Peace, and will make upon them any observations he may deem necessary.

THE CASE OF HANNAH WALSH.

MR. MACARTNEY: I beg to ask Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the case of the late Katie Walsh, of Clash, near Ballyduff, whose mental faculties have been shattered owing to an attack made upon her, and who has been conveyed to the Killarney Lunatic Asylum; and, if so, whether any of her assailants are known, and whether any steps have been taken to make them amenable?

MR. J. MORLEY: The alleged attack on Hannah (not Kate) Walsh is being investigated by the police, who inform me that so far as their inquiries have proceeded there are no grounds whatever for believing that the girl received any ill-treatment prior to her becoming insane.

INCOME TAX COMMISSIONERS.

MR. BALLANTINE (Coventry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Land Tax Commissioners, appointed by an Act of Parliament of last Session, are entitled to be summoned, together with the Land Tax Commissioners previously appointed in each borough, for the purpose of choosing from their number Income Tax Commissioners?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I am informed that it is legally obligatory on the Land Tax Commissioners to meet once a year before April 30, and notice of such meeting has to be posted on church doors, &c. Any person named in the Land Tax Commissioners' Names Act is entitled to attend, and, when qualified, to act as Land Tax Commissioner. Additional Income Tax Commissioners are only appointed when, in the opinion of the Board of Inland Revenue, the existing number is insufficient, and when the statutory notice has been given by the Board in *The London Gazette* that a meeting will be held for that purpose.

VISITS OF TRAINING SHIPS TO IRELAND.

MR. ROSS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the training ship *Northampton* may be expected to visit Lough Foyle; and, if so, when?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): May I respectfully point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Member for Derry has merely copied a question which appeared in my name on the Order Paper last Monday—and which at the request of the Secretary to the Admiralty, I postponed until to-day, and which, in fact, appears later in the Paper—simply substituting "Lough Foyle" for "Cork Harbour"? May I ask you, Sir, whether the offspring should be permitted to take precedence? I am aware, Sir, that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but I think in this case it has been carried a little too far.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The answer of the Minister may possibly satisfy both hon. Gentlemen.

*The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth, Lancashire, Clithero): Perhaps I may answer the two questions together. My answer to the hon. Member for East Cork is, the *Northampton* arrived at Queenstown on the evening of the 12th instant. In answer to the hon. Member for Derry, I have to say that Lough Foyle is not included among the places to be visited by the *Northampton* during her present cruise.

Mr. ROSS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that it was 10 years since the Channel Fleet visited Lough Foyle? Why did the Admiralty treat Lough Foyle in that manner? They even refused this year to send the ordinary gunboat to Londonderry Regatta.

*Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: Every port has its turn. The Channel Fleet has lately been to Lough Swilly, which is in the immediate vicinity. It is impossible to visit all the places which pay the Fleet the compliment of wishing for a visit. As to the sending of a gunboat to a regatta, there is a general rule regulating that.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a promise was made a fortnight ago that the *Northampton* should be sent to Stornoway?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the question on the Paper.

CIVIL SERVANTS AND PARISH COUNCILS.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is understood that all Civil servants may stand as candidates for and be members of Parish and District Councils without any consent being asked of superiors, provided that such candidature and the performance of the duties of Councillor do not interfere with the proper discharge of the Civil servants' duties to the State?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: Yes, Sir; subject to the condition that if in any particular case the duties of the two services are found to conflict, power must be retained to the head of the Department to require the Civil servant to retire from the Council.

THE STRABANE RATE COLLECTION.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it has been brought to his notice that James Craig, rate collector, Strabane Union, is in arrear with his collection £342, in consequence of which some voters must be disqualified for non-payment of rates at forthcoming revision for North Tyrone; whether Craig furnished the Clerk of Union with any list of defaulters so that official objections might be entered on the Voters' List for non-payment of rates; whether the private objector for the North Tyrone Nationalists, John Torish, applied for and was refused permission to inspect the list of defaulters if such exists; whether, last year, a number of persons in Craig's collection, who had not paid rates, were allowed without objection to remain on the Register; and whether the Government will secure that private objectors for political Parties in North Tyrone and elsewhere shall be allowed free access to all Poor Law records and documents on which the right to the franchise depends, so that if whether by mistake, neglect, or any other cause the Union officials fail in their duty, an opportunity may be given to correct errors in time to affect the Register?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am informed that the first paragraph is correct, but that a large portion of this sum is due on waste premises and ratings divided since last year. I am informed that the necessary information with regard to non-payment of rates was furnished by Craig to the Clerk of the Union. The reply to the third paragraph was given in my answer to the question No. 8 for to-day of my hon. and learned Friend. I am informed that the facts are as stated in the fourth paragraph as regards one or two weekly tenants who had been in occupation, for a very short period, of certain premises for which the rates had not been paid and had then changed to other premises. I am informed that the provisions of the Registration Acts with reference to inspection are strictly complied with in this division.

THE NEW TREATY WITH JAPAN.

Sir **T. SUTHERLAND** (Greenock): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the new Treaty, which has been negotiated with Japan, abandons on the part of Great Britain the system of extra-territorial jurisdiction which has been considered hitherto necessary to protect the interests of British subjects in their relations with Oriental countries; and whether the tariff attached to the new Treaty authorities an increase in the amount of duties; and, if so, if adequate notice will be given of the same to enable merchants to govern their operations accordingly?

***The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): Under the new Treaty the extra-territorial jurisdiction will eventually cease, but not for at least five years, and then only in return for certain advantages to be obtained for British interests. The tariff attached to the new Treaty authorises an increase in duties. Under the Treaty the tariff may come into force within one month after the exchange of the ratifications of the Treaty, but it practically cannot be applied to British subjects unless the nationals of other countries are subjected to it, and this they will not be until Japan has concluded similar Treaties with those countries. The Treaty will be published as soon as the ratifications have been exchanged.

ASSISTANT INSPECTOR OF QUARRIES.

Mr. **BRYN ROBERTS** (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Mr. Williams, the recently appointed Assistant Inspector, who is said to have worked at an open quarry, never worked at the rock, but simply, when a young man, used to pick up slabs cast aside by the regular quarrymen and split them into slates; and that, ever since, he has been engaged as a pupil teacher and a schoolmaster; whether, inasmuch as he has appointed, in addition to Mr. Williams, another Assistant Inspector, also from Merionethshire, who has thorough practical experience of work in quarry slate mines, he will re-consider his decision, and appoint another assistant equally experienced in open slate quarrying; and whether he is aware that only about 4,200 workmen are employed in the slate mines of Merionethshire, from which district both the Assistant Inspectors recently appointed are drawn, whereas over 8,000 quarrymen are employed in the open slate quarries of Carnarvonshire?

Mr. **ASQUITH**: It is the fact that Mr. Williams when a young man began work at the quarries as described in the first paragraph of my hon. Friend's question, but he subsequently became for a time a workman in the slate mill. He did not work as a rockman, but he received the slate that he had to dress from a part of the quarry which was then worked as an open quarry, and which he had to visit almost daily. After leaving the quarry he was employed in school work. The fact, however, that Mr. Williams did not work as a rockman appears to me to be immaterial, having regard to the wide knowledge of quarrying in all its branches which he has since obtained, and which, as I have already stated, fully qualified him in my opinion for the appointment. The numbers of quarrymen employed in the open quarries of Carnarvonshire is 8,436; the number employed in the Merionethshire slate mines is 4,321, of whom more than one-half work above ground. There are also in Merionethshire open slate quarries employing from 300 to 400 men, and it must be borne in mind that nearly all the slate mines in Merionethshire were originally worked as open quarries. The Inspectors are appointed not for particular counties, but for the whole of North Wales, and I believe no one is more fitted for the work in all its branches than Mr. Williams. I cannot make any additional appointments at present.

THE WICKLOW MAGISTRACY.

Mr. **J. O'CONNOR** (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with regard to the fact that the last Return of the Irish Magistracy showed that there were, on the County Wicklow Bench, 103 Protestant and 13 Catholic Magistrates, and that the Catholics are nearly four-fifths of the population, what steps has the Lord Chancellor of Ireland taken to reduce the disproportion between Protestants and Catholics on the Wicklow

Bench; and how many Nationalists has the Lord Chancellor appointed since August 1892, and how many Tories and Unionists?

MR. J. MORLEY: Since the present Government came into Office 23 Magistrates have been appointed for the County Wicklow, of whom 15 are believed to be Roman Catholics, seven to be Protestants, and one a member of the Society of Friends. The Lord Chancellor has no knowledge of the political tendencies of any of these gentlemen, but he observes that the appointments of 17 of them were recommended to him by supporters of the present Government.

THE DUBLIN DRAINAGE SCHEME.

MR. ROSS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State of War if he has received a resolution from the Committee of the Dublin Ratepayers' Association, protesting against the Corporation scheme of main drainage as most expensive and inefficient; and whether the War Department has any power to sell the Pigeon House Fort, being an armed fortress, to the Corporation for the purposes of this scheme?

MR. WOODALL (who replied) said: No such resolution as that referred to can be traced as having been received at the War Office. The Government has power to sell Pigeon House Fort.

MR. ROSS: Has the hon. Gentleman any objection to state whether the Report received from the Royal Engineers on the subject is favourable or unfavourable to the scheme?

*MR. WOODALL: I have not seen the Report, but I imagine it would only deal with the scheme so far as it affected the interests of the War Office. The responsibility for the general character of the scheme rests not with the War Office, but with the citizens of Dublin.

MR. ROSS: I will call attention to the matter on the Estimates.

CATTLE TRUCKS ON THE HIGHLAND RAILWAY.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the medium trucks of the Highland Railway Company are undersized and only capable of carrying seven full-sized cattle [as compared with eight by the trucks of other Companies; and that in consequence the rate per truck from some parts of Ross-shire to London is £10, or 25s. more than if the capacity of the truck were equal to that of other Companies; and whether the Highland Railway Company will be required by the Board of Trade to use a medium truck of larger size, or make a proportionate reduction in their charges?

*MR. BRYCE: I have communicated with the Highland Railway Company, and the General Manager informs me that all Highland trucks are capable of carrying eight cattle, are of medium size, and do not materially differ from those of other Companies in Scotland. The Highland Company have some trucks six inches less in length, but these are being gradually converted to the medium or full size—namely, 15 feet 6 inches, and 18 feet in length respectively. The Board of Trade have no power to interfere as to the size of the trucks; any specific complaints of unreasonable treatment will, however, be dealt with by the Board under Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888.

THE TOKAR TRIBESMEN.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.); I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the tribesmen in Tokar are still prevented by the Egyptian Government from cultivating and occupying their lands, and whether there is any prospect of their reinstatement; whether legitimate trade between Suakin and the interior of the Soudan, *viâ* Kassala and Berber, is still interdicted by Her Majesty's Representatives in Cairo; and whether that interdict may be removed?

*SIR E. GREY: The tribesmen of Tokar are not, and have not been, prevented from cultivating and occupying their lands; but owing to the failure of the Baraka flood, there has been more distress in the district, and there is less land under cultivation than there was last year, as the hon. Member will see by referring to the second paragraph on page 13 of Lord Cromer's Report presented to the House in Egypt No. 1, 1894. The third paragraph on the same page states that a limited trade is carried on between Suakin and Berber. This has continued for the last six months, metals or warlike materials being alone interdicted.

THE IRISH LAND AND MIGRATION COMPANY.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to a letter published by His Eminence Cardinal Logue respecting the Irish Land and Migration Company and the dealings of the Government therewith, especially as to the free gift of £50,000 by the State; and will any explanation be called for from any person concerned, or is it intended to take any notice of or call for any reply to the statements of His Eminence?

Mr. J. MORLEY: My attention was called some time ago to this letter, and I at once applied for information on the subject. Communications are proceeding, and I should be glad if the hon. and learned Member will postpone the question for a day or two.

MILITARY BANDS AT POLITICAL MEETINGS.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the report in *The Surrey Advertiser* of 4th August, relative to the proceedings of the Cranleigh Habitation of the Primrose League, at which the band of the West Surrey Regiment is stated to have attended and played; whether he is aware that the report shows that the gathering was a purely Party one; that Sir Richard Webster, M.P., spoke on political subjects, and apologised for the absence of another Conservative Member; whether the War Office has several times declared that military bands must not attend Party meetings; and who is responsible for inviting the band to be present on this occasion, and who sanctioned its attendance on behalf of the regiment?

Mr. WOODALL (who replied) said: The attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the report referred to. In reply to inquiries since made, it appears that permission for the band to play at Cranleigh was given by the officer commanding the 2nd Regimental District at the request of the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight, who is a resident in the locality. The officer commanding was, however, unaware that it was intended to be employed at a Primrose League meeting. Had he anticipated that it would have been so employed he would have refused permission on the ground that it was contrary to the Queen's Regulations.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Am I to understand that the band of any regiment will be granted to anyone who applies for it without any statement as to the object for which it is required?

*__Mr. WOODALL__: It was undoubtedly the duty of the Commanding Officer before granting permission to satisfy himself that the band was intended to be used in a way consistent with the Queen's Regulations. He appears to have failed in that particular.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Did the letter addressed to the officer commanding by the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight withhold from him the information as to the kind of gathering the band was to play at?

*__Mr. WOODALL__: It did not say what the nature and purpose of the particular gathering was.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.E.): Are we to understand that an ex-Attorney General of this House has broken the law?

[No answer was given.]

HARTSHILL SCHOOLROOM.

Mr. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether a class-room built at Hartshill, in the County of Worcester, in the year 1891, and recognised by the Department in the years 1892 and 1893, has now been condemned; and whether he will re-consider the matter?

The VICE PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL (Mr. Acland, York, W.R., Rotherham): There does not appear to be any school of this name in Worcestershire. I do not know whether the question refers to Hartshill National School, in the County of Warwick; but no class-room has been condemned there. If the hon. Member will let me have details, I shall be glad to consider the case.

BUTLEY SCHOOL, SUFFOLK.

Mr. TALBOT: I beg to ask the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education whether he will inquire into the requirement made upon the managers of Butley School, Suffolk, with regard to alterations; whether it is necessary to make it a condition of approval of such requirements that they must be in exact accordance with the technical requirements of Schedule VII. of the Code; and whether he will save expense and trouble to the managers by giving or withholding approval of the proposed alterations before they are made?

MR. ACLAND: It has been laid down in the Code since 1890 that all new school premises and enlargements must conform generally to the Rules contained in Schedule VII. The plans sent up by the managers appear not to have been drawn in accordance with the requirements of Schedule VII., and, moreover, seem, so far as can be judged from the correspondence, to have been not very intelligible. But if the plans are again forwarded to the Department, I will see what further information can be given to the managers.

THE TREATMENT OF ANARCHISTS.

MR. TALBOT: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been drawn to a quotation from *The Journal des Débats* in *The Times* of the 11th instant, in which it is stated that of the countries in which Anarchist centres are known to exist Great Britain is the only one which has refused to take any steps, continuing to think, as Lord Rosebery has said, that all is quiet; and whether he can assure the House that Her Majesty's Government will do all which the law allows to keep such dangerous liberty within bounds? In putting the question, the hon. Member said that the quotation he included in it when he handed it in at the Table had—no doubt for a good reason—been struck out; but he feared that without it the question did not convey his meaning.

*MR. SPEAKER: The question was revised, and even now the expression "dangerous" is left in, and ought not to have been. "Dangerous" is the expression of an opinion.

MR. TALBOT: I am sorry anything has been left in which ought not to have appeared, but as the question now stands, it does not convey the impression I wish it to convey. The last words are,

"Whether he can assure the House that Her Majesty's Government will do all which the law allows to keep such dangerous liberty within bounds."

There is no previous reference to dangerous liberty.

*MR. SPEAKER: Words were purposely omitted.

MR. TALBOT: May I be permitted to read the quotation?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman may give its purport.

MR. ASQUITH: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer the question. The attention of the Government has not been called otherwise than by the question to the passage referred to. It appears to be an irresponsible statement by a foreign journalist. No complaint or representation of any kind in the sense of the quotation has been made to Her Majesty's Government by any foreign Government; and the statements in the foreign newspaper, so far as they purpose to be statements of fact, are without any foundation. The policy of Her Majesty's Government in relation to this question was fully explained by the Prime Minister in the House of Lords on July 17, and I must refer the hon. Member to his speech. We think the measures taken in this country for dealing with Anarchists to be at least as well-considered and effective for the purpose as those adopted elsewhere; and we believe the existing law, if administered with energy and discretion, to be adequate both for our own protection and for the performance of our International engagements.

THE CROPS IN IRELAND.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the serious and damaging effect on the harvest in Ireland owing to the heavy continuous rains, and to the fact that the potato blight in a virulent form has appeared in many districts; and, if so, will the Local Government Board set inquiry on foot as to the effect of the potato disease in the poorer and more distressed districts of the country, and take steps to cope with any distress which may arise?

MR. J. MORLEY: The Reports received from the Inspectors of the Local Government Board show that down to the middle of July the crops everywhere promised well, but the recent and continued heavy rains have been very unfavourable to the hay and potato crop, and the latest Reports show that blight has made its appearance in some parts of the West and South of Ireland. Up to the present the disease has not gone far, though a further continuance of the wet weather would cause it to spread. I am glad to learn that there has been a marked improvement in the price of sheep and cattle at recent fairs in the west, especially in the smaller class of cattle. The Inspectors of the Local Government Board have been instructed to keep the Board informed as to the state of the crops and the condition of the poorer classes, but it will not be possible to form an accurate estimate of the potato harvest until the main crop is dug in October.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): At one time experiments were made with a view of dealing with the disease and stopping it in its early stages. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will say whether the Government has turned their attention to the practicability of continuing those experiments on an extensive scale.

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Land Commission conducted a series of experiments, and the Government are doing what they can to have those experiments extended and the results of them made available.

BULWANT RAO BUTE.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now prepared to state if any provision will be made for the widow of Bulwant Rao Bute, who was murdered under circumstances of great brutality within British jurisdiction in the Gwalior State by Asad Jar Khan, the Superintendent of Police of the Indore State, and two of his subordinates, with the assistance of other persons?

***The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA** (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): The Government of India were asked in a letter by the last mail to state whether any steps have been taken to obtain compensation for the widow of Bulwant Rao. As soon as an answer is received, I will let the hon. Member know.

ASSISTANT INSPECTORS OF MINES.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the limit of age to which persons are eligible for appointment to the office of Assistant Inspectors of Mines is 35 years, and by what authority such limit exists; whether, if such be the case, the operation of the Rule has been to exclude from eligibility for such office a very large number of working miners who have sent in applications to be appointed; and whether he will consider the expediency of procuring a modification of such Rule in the interests of working miners?

Mr. ASQUITH: The limits of age for candidates for the appointment of Inspector of Coal Mines were fixed at 23 to 35 in October, 1873, by Mr. Lowe, who was then Home Secretary; and in 1887, after the passing of the Coal Mines Regulation Act of that year in which the appointment of Assistant Inspector is recognised, the same limits of age were fixed for their appointment by my predecessor, with the concurrence of the Treasury and the Civil Service Commissioners under the power of the Order in Council of June 4, 1870. No doubt a good many working miners, and other candidates as well, have been ineligible for nomination to compete for this appointment in consequence of being over 35. The number of candidates, working miners and others, within that limit is, however, very large, and as at present advised I do not see any sufficient ground for modifying the conditions. I shall be glad to consider any representations from miners and other persons interested in the question.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE TELEPHONE COMPANIES.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether, having regard to the statement in the Treasury Minute of the 23rd of May, 1892, upon the proposal of the development of the telephone system in the United Kingdom, that the intention is to meet, as far as possible, the views of the Municipal Authorities, and having regard to the fact that the proposals are embodied in certain Draft Agreements which have only, at this late period of the Session, just been circulated, he will postpone until next Session the completion of the said Agreements, so as to give the Municipal Authorities, who have now adjourned, an opportunity, which they will not otherwise have, of considering and expressing their views on the Draft Agreements?

Mr. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): At the same time I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, having regard to the statement in the Treasury Minute of the 23rd of May, 1892, upon the proposals for the development of the telephone system in the United Kingdom that the intention is to meet, as far as possible, the views of the Municipal Authorities; and having regard to the fact that the proposals are embodied in certain Draft Agreements which have only just been laid upon the Table of the House, he will postpone until next Session the confirmation of the said Agreements, so as to give the London County Council and other Municipal Authorities, who have now adjourned for the vacation, the opportunity which they will not otherwise have of considering and expressing their views on the said Draft Agreements?

Mr. WHITTAKER (York, W.R., Spen Valley): And I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will defer the final confirmation of the proposed Agreements with the Telephone Companies until next Session; in order to afford the Municipal Authorities of the country an opportunity of considering them and expressing their views upon them?

Sir A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers these questions, may I ask whether the Draft Agreement was not based on a Treasury Minute submitted to and approved by Parliament; and is it not also within the Regulations formulated by Parliament? Would not the public interests suffer by further delay?

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider as to the desirability of referring this Draft Agreement to a committee of business men before next Session commences? Is he aware that the heads of the Draft Agreement were never submitted to the House of Commons?

Mr. A. MORLEY: A Committee in 1892 recommended that the details of the arrangement should be carried out by the Department, and I should not feel justified in referring the matter to a Committee. I have pointed out, in reply to previous questions, that the Agreement does not require the confirmation of Parliament. I may again point out that it merely carries out the policy which has already received Parliamentary sanction, and in connection with which large sums have already been expended, out of the amount authorised to be raised by the Telegraph Act of 1892, in the erection of main trunk lines. As I have before stated, the Telegraph Estimates will afford an opportunity for any discussion that it may be desired to raise, and, in view of the inconvenience and prejudice of the public interests which the further delay desired by the hon. Members would involve, I am not prepared to assent to the postponement of the matter until next Session.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman think it reasonable and fair to the Municipal Authorities who were promised the Agreement before it was signed that it should only have been sent to them when everybody must have known they were away on their holidays?

Mr. A. MORLEY: I regret that I was not able to lay it on the Table earlier. If I thought that it in any sense interfered with the rights, privileges, and powers of the Municipality or in any way restricted their rights with regard to licences I should have agreed with the hon. Member, but I am satisfied such circumstances do not exist, and that no one will be prejudiced.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Will not this Agreement, now practically concluded, prevent the granting of any licences to Municipal Authorities for a period of 18 years?

Mr. A. MORLEY: No; it will not have any such effect. An endeavour was no doubt made to interfere with the rights of the Postmaster General in that respect, but I steadily refused to sanction it, and as the Agreement now stands my discretion in the matter remains absolutely unfettered.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer consent to devote two or three days to the discussion of this Agreement on the Estimates?

Sir W. HARCOURT: No, Sir; not if I can help it.

Mr. A. C. MORTON: My right hon. Friend will be unable to help it.

Sir W. HARCOURT: Then why ask me?

THE UNIFICATION OF LONDON.

Mr. BENN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Report of the Royal Commission for the Unification of London will be circulated?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, Bradford, Central): The Report is in course of preparation, and, as I am informed, will be issued shortly.

THE ANGLO-CONGOLESE AGREEMENT.

Sir C. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government will forthwith lay before Parliament those portions of the Agreement between France and the Congo State, signed on Tuesday, which affect the Anglo-Congolese Convention; whether, in the Agreement with France, the Sovereign of the Congo State binds himself not to exercise any political control whatsoever westward of the 30th degree of longitude, or northward of the latitude 5 degrees 30 minutes, and to limit his action south and east of such lines; and what, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, will be the future situation on the territory of the Nile, near Lado, lying immediately to the north of latitude 5 degrees 30 minutes?

Sir A. ROLLIT: Will the hon. Baronet say whether the Agreement between France and the Congo Free State is or is not made subject to the approval of Great Britain?

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): May I ask whether, under the Convention just concluded between France and the Congo Free State, the King of the Belgians has renounced most of the territory leased to the Congo Free State under the Anglo-Congo Treaty of 12th of May; whether under the Franco-Congo Convention, the French boundary is moved eastward as far as the 30th meridian, so as to come within 50 miles of the Nile, and to include Darfur and a large portion of the Equatorial Provinces; whether Her Majesty's Government were consulted before this Treaty was concluded; and whether Her Majesty's Government intend to recognise its validity?

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): And will the hon. Baronet state what is the effect of the new Franco-Congolese Agreement upon the Anglo-Belgian Agreement of the 12th of May, 1894; and whether he will lay a copy of the former document upon the Table of House?

***Sir E. GREY**: We have not yet received the text as signed. When it is received it will be laid before Parliament. By this Agreement the Congo State renounces all influence and occupation west and north of a line thus determined: Longitude 30° E. starting from its intersection with the watershed of the Congo and Nile basins up to the point where it meets the parallel 5° 30′ N., and then along that parallel to the Nile. No limitation south and east of this line is made by the Agreement. Her Majesty's Government were informed of the arrangement between France and the King of the Belgians, and did not oppose His Majesty's desire to sign it; but they are in no sense parties to it, and the territory north of Lado and in the western watershed of the Nile basin remains in the British sphere of influence, subject to the rights of Turkey and Egypt, as it was before the Agreement with the King of the Belgians was signed. Lord Dufferin has returned to Paris to continue with M. Hanotaux the discussion which we hope will lead to a settlement of pending difficulties between the two countries.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The hon. Baronet has not answered the second paragraph. Can he say whether the French Government have given an undertaking not to occupy Darfur or any portion of the Equatorial Province?

Sir A. ROLLIT: And the hon. Baronet has not answered my question, in which, however, I should like to substitute the word "concurrence" for "approval."

*SIR E. GREY: I said we were informed of the arrangement between France and the King of the Belgians. France has not given any undertaking under this Agreement, which does not move the French boundary into the Nile basin.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: What is the degree of latitude at which the Franco-Congo frontier intersects the 30th degree of longitude? Much depends on that.

SIR E. GREY: It is defined in the first Article of the Treaty.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: My point is this: How far will the French be from the Nile waterway? Will they come within 40 miles of the Nile itself? Has France given any undertaking not to occupy any of the region which we know as the Equatorial Province?

*SIR E. GREY: I cannot make any statement as to the French undertakings while the negotiations are proceeding. The Agreement, I repeat, does not alter the French boundary at all in a way to affect the Nile basin.

THE EGLWYSEG RURAL POSTMAN.

MR. H. ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the case of Edward Thomas, rural postman in the Eglwyseg district, Denbighshire, who, after 20 years' service, has recently met with an accident whilst on duty which totally disabled him for further work; whether he is aware that owing to a technical difficulty the usual pension has been refused to him by the Lords of the Treasury; and whether, under the special circumstances of the case, he will use his influence to obtain a relaxation of the strict terms of the Superannuation Act with the view to securing a pension or an adequate provision for the person referred to?

MR. A. MORLEY: The case of Edward Thomas has been brought under my notice, and all the facts have been reported to the Lords of the Treasury, who, while regretting that Thomas's service did not entitle him to the benefits of the Superannuation Acts, have been pleased to sanction the payment to him of a special gratuity of £15 from the Compassionate Fund at their disposal. Under these circumstances, I am sorry to say, in reply to the hon. Member's question, that I can hold out no hope of obtaining more favourable treatment for Thomas.

CHELSEA HOSPITAL.

CAPTAIN NAYLOR-LEYLAND (Colchester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the Report of the Committee which was appointed during this Session to inquire into Chelsea Hospital may be expected to be published?

*MR. WOODALL (who replied) said: The Secretary of State has not yet received the Report of the Committee on Chelsea Hospital; but it is understood that it will be submitted to him in a few days, and it will be published in due course.

CRICCIETH BEACH.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Board have issued a notice prohibiting the removal of sand, gravel, or other materials from a portion of the beach at Criccieth, South Carnarvonshire; whether it has been brought to his notice that stones, sand, and gravel for building purposes at Criccieth have hitherto been obtained from the beach, and that this prohibition will seriously affect the development of the town; and will he explain the reason why the notice is issued?

MR. BRYCE: Complaints were received by the Board of Trade from the Local Board of Criccieth and also from the owners of properties fronting the sea near Criccieth that the removal of materials from the foreshore below high-water mark in front of their properties was endangering the safety of the sea wall erected by the Local Board and was causing damage to their lands lying behind the beach. Having been advised that these complaints were well founded the Board decided to adopt the course usually followed by them in similar instances, where it is apprehended that the practice complained of might facilitate encroachment by the sea, and issued notices in the usual form prohibiting the removal of materials from the foreshore referred to.

THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL.

Mr. MAGUIRE (Clare, W.): In the absence of the hon. Member for South Roscommon, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, with the view of encouraging voluntary settlements pending the introduction of another Evicted Tenants Bill, he would be able to promise to favourably consider a provision in the measure under which such pecuniary grant can be made in the case of such settlements as the tribunal to be appointed would find the parties would have been entitled to if the Bill which recently passed this House had become law, notwithstanding that the evicted tenant may have been reinstated before a new Act shall have been passed?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I am not sure, after carefully reading the question, what my hon. Friend wishes. At all events, it is a hypothetical and problematical question, which could scarcely be answered across the floor of the House.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): The question is this: If in the coming winter an arrangement is made by any of the evicted tenants with their landlords on the same terms as those included in the rejected tenants Bill, will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that in any future Bill those cases of arrangement shall be allowed to share the benefits?

Mr. J. MORLEY: Before giving an undertaking of that kind I should want to know what were the terms of the arrangement?

Colonel NOLAN: If the landlord accepts one year's rent from the tenant, will the hon. Gentleman undertake that the Government will allow him another year's rent?

Mr. J. MORLEY: It is obvious that I cannot give an undertaking of that kind. That would be a matter for the Arbitration Tribunal to deal with.

STROKESTOWN MEDICAL OFFICER.

Mr. MAGUIRE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Dr. Dillon, medical officer of Strokestown Dispensary and a Magistrate for the County of Roscommon, in a charge of assault brought by the Queen, at the prosecution of Patrick M'Loughlin against Francis M'Loughlin and Michael M'Loughlin, was called in and professionally employed to attend Patrick M'Loughlin, the prosecutor; that the defendants were obliged to pay Dr. Dillon £2 for a certificate that the life of the prosecutor was not in danger, before they got out on bail; that Dr. Dillon afterwards, on the 1st of August, attended as a Magistrate at Rooskey Petty Sessions, in the County Roscommon, on the hearing of the said complaint, and adjudicated in the case, notwithstanding the protest of the solicitor for the defence that he should not do so, being an interested party who had been in professional attendance for reward on the prosecutor; and that Dr. Dillon refused to leave the Bench, and took an active part in the proceedings, saying that he did not care for the protests of the solicitor, and adjudicated with the other Magistrates in the case, when the defendants were fined £4 and costs; and if he will bring the matter under the notice of the Lord Chancellor with the view of preventing Justices of the Peace adjudicating under similar circumstances in the future?

Mr. J. MORLEY: It would be improper for a Magistrates to adjudicate in a case in which he had been professionally employed. If the facts are as stated in the question, I shall bring the matter under the notice of the Lord Chancellor.

THE IRISH ORDNANCE SURVEY OFFICE.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture has the employment of excessive juvenile labour been discontinued in the Ordnance Survey Office, Phoenix Park, Dublin, and has the Fair Wage Resolution been adopted in the Department?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. Gardner, Essex, Saffron Walden): I am sorry I cannot add anything to what I have already stated to my hon. Friend in reply to the previous questions he has addressed to me on this subject. The information before me goes to show that the proportion of boy or "juvenile" labour is not greater than is consistent with the nature of the work to be done, and that a comparison of the position of the Ordnance

Survey Staff in Dublin with that of persons doing similar work in private employ would be favourable to the former, and I may refer my hon. Friend to the conclusions arrived at by the Departmental Committee of 1891, a copy of whose Report was laid on the Table.

THE IRISH LAND COMMITTEE AND "THE TIMES."

Mr. SEXTON (Kerry, N.): I wish, Sir, to draw your attention to the fact that *The Times* newspaper of to-day under the heading "Political Notes"' contains a series of paragraphs purporting to give detailed particulars of the deliberations of the Select Committee on the Working of the Irish Land Acts yesterday, the Committee being now engaged in the consideration of their Report. The same newspaper on a previous day contained what purported to be the particulars of the proposals contained in the Draft Report of the Chairman of the Committee which was confidentially circulated among the Members of the Committee. I am informed also that one of the News Agencies has circulated a paragraph containing similar information. I wish to know, Sir, whether communications such as must have been made to the Press in this case are permissible?

***Mr. SPEAKER**: It is often very difficult in cases of the kind to prevent transactions in Committee from being made public. I should say that it was for the Chairman of a Committee to consult with his colleagues as to the best means of preventing any part of their Report from being made public before it is officially presented to the House. Perhaps something might be done in that way to prevent these occurrences.

Mr. J. MORLEY: This question was raised at a meeting of the Committee to-day, and, I think, very properly. Having regard to the nature of the proceedings of the Select Committee, and to the details of their elaborate Report, I am surprised that any Member of that Committee should have felt himself at liberty to communicate to the Press any account of what has occurred. The feeling expressed this morning in the Committee was very strong and decisive that whoever had made this communication to the Press had been guilty of an impropriety, and to some extent of an act of disloyalty to his colleagues in the Committee.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I wish to ask, Sir, whether it is not possible to withhold from newspapers that disregard the ordinary practices of this House the privileges which they enjoy of admission to the House and to the Lobby.

***Mr. SPEAKER**: We should consider rather the source from which the communication originally came. The newspaper may not be as guilty as the person who communicates the news.

MOTION.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I wish to move—

> "That, for the remainder of the Session, Government business be not interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House; and may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."

I do not think it is necessary I should make any statement as to precedent. The Leader of the Opposition, I understand, assents to this Motion, which it is customary to make at some date before the expected close of a Session, when, practically speaking, the legislative work of the Session is finished. The Government do not contemplate late Sittings after this Motion has been passed. The question of the exclusion from consideration of all but Government business has been raised, and in my opinion it is desirable that Government business should be alone dealt with. I adhere to the words which I used when a similar Motion was made in 1891 by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square. I said then—

> "I know the difficulty there is sometimes in distinguishing between opposed and unopposed Bills, and I think the best course to take at this late period of the Session is to lay down that no Business shall be taken except Government business. It would not be a kindness to private Members to keep this Bill in a state of suspended animation. It would be kinder both to the promoters and the opponents of the Bill that exceptional Rules should extend only to Bills brought forward by the Government, and not to private Members' Bills."

I entirely demur to that view, and object to that exceptional proceeding for the closing of the Session. I think that Members should know what they have to expect and what they have not to expect, and that Members should not be kept unnecessarily waiting for Bills which may or may not come on. If this proposal be carried, there will be hardly any Government legislative business on the Paper at all, and it will be known that the business of the House is Supply. Members will then know that they can cease their attendance here for the purpose either of promoting or opposing private Members' Bills. I think that if this course be followed it will be for the convenience of all sections of the House, and that it will conduce to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. I hope, therefore, that this Resolution may be passed in the form in which it is upon the Paper.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, for the remainder of the Session, Government Business be not interrupted under the provisions of any Standing Orders regulating the Sittings of the House; and may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government Business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) remarked that the Church Patronage Bill was read a second time unanimously by the House, that it had passed through the Grand Committee, and only had now to get through the Report stage and the Third Reading. If the Government had not taken the whole time of the House the Bill would now have been disposed of. The Government had selected the Miners (Eight Hours) Bill, and had devoted two days to it at this late period of the Session. It seemed to him to be a matter of considerable hardship that the Government should forward one private Member's Bill, and refuse to do anything for a measure which had reached the position now occupied by the Church Patronage Bill. No doubt the Government had to pay a debt for the support they had received from some of their followers, and he supposed that under these circumstances they had been bound to give time for the Miners (Eight Hours) Bill. He did not wish to divide against the Motion, but he thought that some protest ought to be made against the system of favouritism the Government had adopted. The precedent which had been established was a very dangerous one, and might lead to a good deal of confusion hereafter.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, he had been very badly treated indeed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the Crofters Acts (Inclusion of Leaseholders) Bill, and he wished to know whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer would take this Bill under his wing and pass it this Session. In 1886, when the Crofters Act passed, the Liberal Party had not sufficient backbone to assent to a clause including in its provisions small tenants who held under lease. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and his colleagues knew now that this was a mistake, and he asked them why they did not rectify that mistake. The right hon. Gentleman was in the position of one who owed a 3, 6, or 12 months' bill to the Highland Members. Why did not the right hon. Gentleman pay the bill so as to make things square? He (Mr. Weir) did not think the right hon. Gentleman was taking a straight or an honourable course in regard to the crofters, and he hoped he would avail himself of this opportunity of doing so. Everybody was anxious to get away for his holiday; but the right hon. Gentleman's holiday might be delayed if he did not promise to pass the Bill, unless he was going to flee from the House and the post of duty.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had expressed great kindness towards all private Members' Bills, but there was such a thing as killing a Bill with kindness. The Bill to repeal the Crimes Act passed its Second Reading by a majority of 60, but the Government afterwards took away from private Members 10 or 12 Wednesdays, on any one of which the Bill might have been discussed in Committee. The Government had given facilities for the discussion of the Eight Hours Bill. He (Colonel Nolan) had supported the Bill, but he must say that the next time the Government favoured one Bill to the exclusion of another, they ought to know whether Members had made up their minds to support that Bill. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer was going to favour any Bill, he ought to have favoured the Repeal of the Crimes Act Bill. He (Colonel Nolan) hoped the Government would grant an

Autumn Session in order to pass this Bill, and perhaps to pass a second time the Bill which the House of Lords threw out the other day. This year three or four private Members' Bills had passed their Second Reading, but the only one of them that had got through Committee was the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill. If the Government would promise that the Bill for the repeal of the Crimes Act should be included in the Queen's Speech next year he would be satisfied.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he should feel bound to divide upon the Motion. There was a coalition between the two Front Benches, and whenever he saw that he thought it was the duty of private Members to vote against it. During the last two Sessions almost every hour of the time usually given to private Members had been appropriated for Government Business, and now the Government absolutely proposed to take away the last chance private Members had of passing their Bills. He quite admitted that where a Bill was seriously opposed, as the Church Patronage Bill and the Criminal Law Repeal Bill were, there was a great deal to be said for the Government proposal, but there were Bills and Bills. He had a Bill which had passed its Second Reading not by a majority of 60, but without a Division at all. Its object was to enable women to become Poor Law Guardians in Ireland as they could in England and Scotland. The Government were destroying all chance of passing this Bill, and he felt bound to protest against the attack which was being made upon the rights of private Members.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (Manchester, E.): My hon. Friend who has just sat down has stated with perfect truth that in this matter there is an agreement between the two Front Benches. He says that when he sees the two Front Benches form such an unholy alliance he and other non-official or ex-official Members ought to band together to resist our oppressive proceedings. I would ask him whether there is any agreement among the non-official Members with regard to any single proposal that is made? My hon. Friend desires to see passed a Bill which I think is a very excellent measure, but one upon which there is not a universal agreement.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Only one Member objects to it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If we were to propose to allow the hon. Member's Bill to be discussed and were to put aside the Bills of my hon. Friend the Member for Islington (Mr. Bartley), the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan), and the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty (Mr. Weir), all those gentlemen would go into the Lobby against him. The truth is, that on these occasions every Member who has a Bill which he believes in is anxious to get it passed, but the House at large is not at all prepared to give any Member exceptional privileges. That being so, it is evident that we must either give everybody equal privileges or deprive everybody of all privileges. There is one good reason for not giving everybody equal privileges, and that is, that if we did so we should never get a holiday at all. I think the two Front Benches are quite as ready to do their work as any other Member, and even the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose holidays are, I understand, to be curtailed, has given us the advantage of his advice and guidance through a very long and laborious Session. The question is not whether the Government have managed their business well in the past, but whether we can manage it in the future so as to secure the most convenience to the general body. It surely must be obvious to private Members that you cannot give special privileges to one class or one county, or one Member, which you are not prepared to extend to all Members.

*MR. WEIR: All the Highland counties want the Crofters Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not possible to give to one district, or to one county, or to one Member the privileges which you will not extend to every other district, and county, and Member. If you give such privileges this Session would not only be not drawing to a close, but would hardly have begun its infant career. I do not wish to turn my eyes to the past, but to look simply to the future, and to see how the few remaining days of the Session can be best spent for the general convenience of the House. I shall most cordially support the Leader of the House when he follows the invariable practice of all his predecessors at this stage of the Session, and moves a Resolution which has been on every similar occasion found to embody principles which are intended to further the general convenience of all Members, to whatever Party they belong or whatever interest they may represent.

Sir W. HARCOURT: With the indulgence of the House I should like to say a few words in reply. It is said that owing to the Government having taken a very large portion of the time of the House private Members have not had the opportunity of passing their Bills into law. Well, I hold in my hand a list of nearly 20 Bills that have been passed this Session by private Members, and I would draw attention to the number of Scotch measures that there are amongst them. The list comprises the Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill, the Charitable Trusts Amendment Bill, the Chimney Sweepers' Bill, the County Councils Association (Scotland) Bill, the Fishery Boards (Scotland) Bill, the Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill, the Industrial and Provident Societies Bill, the Industrial Schools Bill, the Injured Animals Bill, the Locomotive Threshing Engines Bill, the Music and Dancing Licences Bill, the Outdoor Relief (Friendly Societies) Bill, the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill, the Public Libraries (Scotland) Bill, the Solicitors (Examination) Bill, the Uniforms Bill, the Wild Birds' Protection Bill, and the Public Libraries (Ireland) Bill. It will be seen, therefore, that private Members have not been entirely excluded from successful legislation this Session.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, the Bills mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman were those which had been passed after 12 o'clock, and they were unopposed Bills of very little importance. He should vote against the Motion. He had noticed that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was the only gentleman present who had cheered the Chancellor of the Exchequer during his statement. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) when again he had a seat on the Treasury Bench would go one better than the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and would move a similar Motion to this a month or two earlier. By-and-bye Members would meet at Westminster to witness a game at chess played by a few gentlemen on the Front Benches, the non-official Members acting as the living pawns, whose duty would be merely to move through the Lobbies. He objected strongly to the course pursued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he intended to move a reduction of his salary in Committee of Supply. The Crofters (Leaseholders) Bill, of which he (Dr. Clark) had charge, was merely the first clause of the Government Bill that was withdrawn a few days ago. Its object was sanctioned last Session, and had been sanctioned again this Session. The object was to admit 300 or 400 poor farmers to the benefits of the Crofters Act, from which they had hitherto been excluded because they were leaseholders. He had been very hard upon landlords; but he must say that, as far as the Crofters Act were concerned, the great bulk of the Tory landlords in the Highlands had acted most generously in bringing these poor leaseholders under the Acts. There were, however, Liberal landlords who had not done so. In his county the Liberal landlord was a rack-renter, and yet the Government would not give even five minutes to pass a Bill for the relief of these poor people. They made promises, but never carried them out. The result would be that if the Government did bring in a Bill the men who would have been benefited by it would be bankrupt, and would be away to America. He objected to the Motion on another ground—namely, the humbugging—if he might use the phrase—of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, having promised at the beginning of the Session that he would appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the financial relations between Scotland and England, had failed to redeem that promise. Not a single Scotch Estimate had been taken this year. Never had the Scotch Votes been in this position before. He was not astonished at the Leader of the Opposition agreeing with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the present occasion, because he had always noticed that when any bad work was to be done the Tories in Opposition got it done by a Liberal or Whig Minister, and then subsequently, when the Tories were in power, the wedge was driven home. Upon this and every similar occasion he would vote against such a Motion.

SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, there had been a good deal of censure applied to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, some of which he thought the right hon. Gentleman heartily deserved. There was one point upon which he would press the right hon. Gentleman, and that was as to the qualification concerning the Twelve o'Clock Rule. He hoped they would not greatly exceed that hour. He believed the House was disposed to agree to the general principle of not doing much contentious business after 12 o'clock. His own experience led him to believe that when business of that character was dealt with it was seldom done well, and that time would be saved by adjourning to the following day. The time had come when an unofficial Member could not possibly pass a Bill through the House if it met with any opposition whatever. After 12 o'clock something might be done; but at the end of the Session the whole time of the House was taken, and Bills which had been in progress were destroyed. That was, in his opinion, simply a great waste of public time. He should, therefore, oppose the Motion on principle. It was urged by the two Front Benches that this course had always been adopted at a certain period, and private Members were now making a protest, because they wished to prevent it, if possible, in the future. But he might remind the right hon. Gentleman that some qualification of that had been allowed, because the practice had been—at any rate in some cases where non-contentious Bills existed on the Order Paper which promised advantage to the State—to allow them to be "starred," and he himself had to acknowledge considerable courtesy in that direction. But the chief purpose for which he rose was to say that he believed the reason why this time was wasted, and why these measures were prevented from becoming law was the faulty procedure of the House, and he also believed that there was a rising current of opinion to that effect. There were two sources of waste of time—the destruction of a great deal of legislation that had been carried almost to maturity, and the constant Motions to take further time. When they had nearly done their work it should be carried over to the following Session. A strong current of opinion was rising in that direction, and he hoped that when the matter was brought before the House next Session, which it would be from both sides, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would think that it was time to reconsider the procedure of the House, with a view to adapting it to modern requirements and to avoiding the further endangering of our Parliamentary institutions.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, the Motion resolved itself into two branches, one of which was of use to the Government and the other of no use, and being of no use it made private Members "poor indeed." The Leader of the Opposition had said that this was a course which had been invariably taken by the Leader of the House and his predecessors. He ventured to say that they were now asked to agree to a course never taken before—namely, that the Speaker should leave the Chair without Question put immediately after Government business had been disposed of. This kind of Resolution began with the new Rules of 1887. Then the practice was towards the end of the Session, for Mr. Smith, after the Government business was disposed of, to move the adjournment of the House. Now, however, an important departure had been made under the advice of the authorities of the House, who were always watching for an opportunity to restrict the rights of private Members, and the Government now proposed to take away from them even the right of making a few observations on the Motion for the Adjournment. Their rights as private Members were to be further curtailed. That was a course that had never been taken before, and he believed if any precedent could be shown for it it was not three years old. With what object was this course being taken? All the Government wanted was to go on after 12 o'clock with their business, and when they had got that right, why should they seek to deprive the Irish Members of the right of going on after 12 o'clock; and again, if any emergency arose, why should they not be afforded the opportunity of making a few observations on the Motion for the Adjournment of the House, which sometimes was an important matter? If any precedent could be found for this Motion he would be glad to see it, and he respectfully submitted to the Government that they ought to be satisfied to have the Motion passed down to the word "opposed," and allow the remainder to be omitted. That would concede to the Government everything they desired. Of course, it would be very unfair to proceed with Bills that were sprung on the House because of Government business collapsing suddenly; but he thought a Motion to deprive private Members of the right of proceeding with Unopposed Business after 12 o'clock was a very strong order, and that it was still more stringent to say that the Speaker should leave the Chair without Question put. He thought this proposed invasion of the rights of private Members, that the Speaker should leave the Chair without Question put, was one which should be opposed by all sections of the House. He regarded this Motion as another blow struck at the privileges of private Members by the authorities of the House.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, he heartily agreed with the remarks made by his hon. and learned Friend opposite. The Government ought to be allowed to go on with their business after 12 o'clock, but they ought not to take away all the opportunities of private Members. Both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Leader of the Opposition seemed to make a great point with reference to absent Members. Why should they do so? Surely Members who were away on holiday were neglecting their duties here and ought not to be considered; Members staying here doing the work of the country were those who ought to be considered. If a Division was taken, he should go into the Lobby against the Motion, because he always objected to an agreement between the two Front Benches. He rose more particularly to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he intended to force through the Draft Agreement with the National Telephone Company. So long ago as last November the Postmaster General promised that a copy of the Draft should be circulated before the Government agreed to it, not only amongst Members but amongst the Municipalities of the country, so that there might be ample opportunity of considering it. If the Agreement had been concluded, it would be a distinct breach of faith. Sir J. Hutton, Chairman of the London County Council, attended at the House of Commons yesterday, and told him that it would be utterly impossible for him to get the Council together to consider that Agreement. The Council was one of the parties to whom the promise was made. The latter part of the Resolution would still further restrict their rights in regard to the bringing on of this Agreement, and therefore he had additional ground for complaint. He was bound to say candidly to his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, unless he would agree to put off the consideration of this Agreement until next Session, his wheels would drag heavily through the Estimates. This House ought to jealously watch Company promoters, and therefore he had a right to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give them the reasonable time they required, and that he would not allow it to be said of the Government that they distinctly broke a pledge given to the municipal institutions of the country.

Sir W. HARCOURT: With reference to the question raised by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Louth, will he allow me to read to him the Resolution which was agreed to without a Division about the same period before the end of the Session of 1892? It was as follows:—

> "That, for the remainder of the Session, Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House each day at the conclusion of Government business without Question put."

With regard to what has been said by the Members for Peterborough, Ross, and Caithness, all I have to say is that if they disapprove so entirely of my conduct in the regulation and the furthering of the business of this House, it is perfectly within their power to dismiss me from the situation which I hold and put somebody in my place who will conduct the business of the House in a manner more to their satisfaction.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he would like to be allowed to explain that he had said nothing about the right hon. Gentleman's conduct of the Business of the House. All he asked about was the Agreement with the National Telephone Company.

Sir W. HARCOURT: We will consider that matter, and we will not attempt to press the agreement at present if we find that there is a well-founded opposition to it.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he thought it was only right that a protest should be made against the manner in which Supply had been treated. They found that almost every Vote that had to be taken would have to be discussed under the pressure of the Rule they were about to have, and in this attenuated House. He hoped the precedent of the Government would not be followed. The House had just reason to complain that they had not had earlier in the Session a fair and reasonable opportunity of dealing with the important questions that arose on the Estimates.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS (Flint, &c.) said, he wished to point out, in answer to the protest made by the promoters of the Church Patronage Bill, that the loss of that Bill was due in a great measure to the conduct of those hon. Gentlemen in connection with the Places of Worship Enfranchisement Bill, which, having been read a second time without a Division in this House, was subsequently massacred by them.

Colonel HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked whether, if the Motion was carried, it would prevent any discussion on the last day of the Session on questions which hon. Members might wish to raise with reference to the conduct of business during the Session?

Sir W. HARCOURT: No, Sir; it did not last Session, for that was the only occasion on which I ever made a speech in this House before breakfast at 10 o'clock in the morning, in answer to a question raised by a colleague of the hon. Gentleman, one of the Members for Sheffield.

***Sir C. W. DILKE** (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, that the Appropriation Bill would afford hon. Members ample opportunity to raise any questions they might desire to raise. He agreed entirely with the remarks of his hon. Friend opposite, the Member for South Islington; but on this occasion he thought the Motion of the Government was reasonable in the circumstances of the case.

Mr. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he desired to associate himself with the protest made by his hon. Friend the Member for Peterborough with reference to the National Telephone Company agreement. He was glad to hear from the Chancellor of the Exchequer that if he found a feeling adverse to that agreement he would defer the consideration of it. That was a very different statement to that made by the Postmaster General earlier in the evening. The feeling in the London County Council was very strong upon this question. They strongly objected to the absence of opportunity for examining its provisions.

Mr. A. MORLEY said, he would undertake to see the Chairman of the London County Council, and if he understood that there was a serious objection to the agreement taken he would reconsider the matter.

Mr. BENN said, the Chairman of the London County Council had gone for his holidays, and he and his hon. Friend the Member for Shoreditch and others represented the feeling of the Council.

Mr. COHEN (Islington, E.) said, that, so far as he knew, there had been no expression of opinion by the County Council, nor was he aware that the Chairman possessed any authority to delegate the expression of the opinion of the Council to any Member or Members of the House of Commons who happened to be members of the Council.

Mr. A. MORLEY said, that if any Members of the House who were also members of the London County Council would see him afterwards they might discuss the matter.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland) said, that many large Municipalities would be affected by this agreement, and past experience had taught them that they should not accept what the Government and the Company had agreed to. They desired ample time to examine the agreement which had been made, and he himself would regard it as an evasion if the Government attempted to get consent to this agreement without giving to all the Municipalities of the country ample time to examine it.

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. Morley, Nottingham, E.) said, he understood there was a general feeling that this agreement should be postponed, and under the circumstances he would assent to that course.

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, that the conversation that had taken place showed the difficulty of bringing the matter forward at a time when the Municipalities were not easily reached.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes 130 ; Noes 33.—(Division List, No. 233.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

COMMITTEE.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*THE **SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA** (Mr. H. H. FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.) : There is a difference between the modes of presenting the English and the Indian Budgets. The English Budget deals with the income and expenditure of the year which has closed and the estimated income and expenditure of the future year. But that has not been the practice with reference to the Indian Budget, nor can we alter that fact. Although the last financial year ended on March 31, 1894, accounts have to be collected and examined from upwards of 1,000 treasuries and sub-treasuries, from 500 civil and military districts, and from all the Railway Companies, all the Municipalities, and all the District Boards. These accounts have all to be checked, and involve many transactions, all of which have to be examined and audited before the accounts for the year can be finally closed ; the effect of this is that, although the financial year closed in March, the real position of that financial year cannot be ascertained until the end of the calendar year—namely, December 31. Hence we have this practice : that in considering the Indian Budget we consider three years—the year the accounts of which have been closed and audited, the revised Estimates of the last financial year, and the Budget proposals of the coming year. Therefore, I ask the Committee to-night to consider the income and expenditure for the year ending March 31, 1893, which is now finally closed. I will then say a very few words on the Estimates for the year ending March 31, 1894 ; and next submit to the Committee the proposals of the Indian Government with reference to the income and expenditure of the current financial year, which will end on March 31, 1895. I deal, therefore, first with the closed year of 1893. The gross income of that year was Rx.90,172,000. I leave out the figures below 1,000 for the sake of simplicity. The expenditure of the year was Rx.91,005,000, which closed, therefore, with a deficit of Rx.833,412. Those are very large figures, ninety millions of revenue, ninety millions of expenditure, and I have observed a tendency in speeches and also in literature to describe the taxation of India as representing something like Rx.90,000,000, and the expenditure of India as equalling that very large figure. This gross revenue and expenditure are very different things from the real revenue and real expenditure of India. In the gross revenue are included the entire receipts, and in the gross expenditure the entire expenditure of the whole railway system of India, the whole of the canal system and of the irrigation works, and a variety of other items which have no connection, on the one hand, with taxation, or, on the other hand, with Government expenditure as we understand it here. Some of the large undertakings I have mentioned are carried on at a profit, and some at a loss, by the Government of India. We will, therefore, pass at once from gross revenue to net revenue, and from gross expenditure to net expenditure. The Government of India regards net expenditure upon very much the same lines on which this country for a great many years regarded it—namely, it deducts the cost of collection from the revenue. I believe it was my right hon. Friend the Member for Midlothian who altered that practice, and introduced as an item of expenditure in this country the cost of collectiong the revenue. That is a practice which I think is a sound and economical one. I think that the collection of revenue is as much a part of the expenditure of the Government as any other expenditure in which it indulges, and perhaps there is often as much room for economical criticism in reference to expenses of collection as to any other question. In the Return of Net Income and Expenditure for 10 years that I have presented to the House I have not allowed that deduction ; I have there treated the produce of the main heads of revenue as the net income of India ; but nowI have further to reduce that net income by the cost of collection. Therefore, in the year just passed there is a discrepancy between the two statements of something like Rx.8,000,000 or Rx.9,000,000, the cost of collection. I thought it would very much confuse the Committee if I endeavoured to introduce a new plan, and therefore I have followed the plan of my predecessors, and it is followed in the statements of the Government of India, and in my Explanatory Memorandum in dealing with the net revenue and net expenditure. I wish the Committee to understand that net revenue is after deducting the cost of collection, and that net expenditure does not include the cost of collection. Treating in this manner the figures of the net income and net expenditure, the net revenue of India in the year 1893 was Rx.51,606,000. The estimate which was made when the Budget was produced for that year was Rx.49,582,000, showing an increase of revenue of something like Rx.2,024,000. In considering this revenue I should like to deal with the revenue of India in detail, and I think it is better to deal with it on the figures of 1893; there is little variation in 1894, and there is not much variation in our estimate for 1895. I think it will promote our convenience if I make whatever remarks I have to make upon the revenue of India upon this closed account of 1893. This revenue of Rx.51,606,000 arises from four sources, but all these sources are not taxation. India, like England, has a tax revenue and a non-tax revenue, and the Rx.51,606,000 must not, cannot, and ought not to be taken as any estimate of the taxation of the people of India, as I shall endeavour to show a little further on. These four sources are—first, the land revenue, with which I associate the sum raised from the working of the forests and the tributes from the native States; secondly, opium; thirdly, pure taxation; and to these I have added, in my 10 years' statement, a fourth, the commercial services, some of which, certainly in years past, have been carried on at a very considerable profit. I am sorry to say that, owing to a cause I shall have to refer to presently—namely, the depreciation in the value of the rupee—that profit has been turned into a debit charge. But, as in this country, the Post Office, the Telegraph, the Mint, and various other services, we find generally produce a profit; there they sometimes produce a profit and sometimes a loss; but, at all events, they form a distinct item of revenue. The first item of the revenue is the land revenue, which in 1893 produced Rx.20,914,000. There are also profits on forests, Rx.724,000, and tributes, Rx.790,000. The first question I have to ask myself is whether, in estimating the burden of taxation in India, we are to include this sum of Rx.22,428,000 net, which, after deducting assignments, is Rx.25,719,000 gross; whether we are to regard that as part of the taxation of the people, or as a revenue which is not derived from taxation properly so-called. A great deal of the calculations which are made with reference to the taxation of India will depend upon the category in which this very large sum is placed. I gathered from the remarks of the hon. Member for Flintshire in the Debate yesterday, that he inclines to the view that this is an item of taxation, and not to be included as a non-tax revenue. The hon. Member for Banffshire stated yesterday that upon this question I gave the official view, that I looked through official spectacles, and presented to the House the views which were given to me. I am going to quote two authorities as to the proper position of this land revenue. They certainly are authorities of the first rank and standing in any question of political economy, and they are also two statesmen well known to have a very great sympathy with the bulk of the people of India, and who would not, I am sure, have strained a point as against any view which should be taken in favour of the people as against the Government. The two authorities I am going to quote are Mr. John Stuart Mill and Mr. Fawcett, and I think the Committee will admit they are authorities who can speak with decision upon a question of this sort. Mr. Mill said—

> "A large portion of the revenue of India consists of the rent of land. So far as this resource extends in any country, the public necessities of the country may be said to be provided for at no expense to the people at large. Where the original right of the State to the land of the country has been reserved, and its natural—but no more than natural—rents made available to meet the public expenditure, the people may be said to be so far untaxed; because the Government only takes from them as a landlord. . . . It is of course, essential that the demand of revenue should be kept within the limits of a fair rent. Under the native Govern-

ments, and in the earlier periods of our own, this limit was often exceeded. But, under the British rule, in every instance in which the fact of excessive assessment was proved by large outstanding balances and increased difficulty of realisation, the Government has, when the fact was ascertained, taken measures for reducing the assessment."

Mr. Fawcett, writing a great many years after Mill, says—

> "The Government in India exercises over a great portion of the soil the same rights of property as those which an English landlord exercises over his own estate. The Government in India takes the place of individual landlords, and cultivators of the soil rent their land from Government instead of from private landholders. . . . . . As far as the cultivators of the soil are concerned, it can be no matter of consequence whatever to them whether they pay a Land Tax to the Government or whether they pay rent to private landholders. Hence a Land Tax is no harder upon the cultivator, nor does his impost cause any loss to the rest of the community. It therefore follows that a Land Tax, so long as it does not exceed a rack-rent, cannot increase the price of products raised from land, for those who grow products would not sell them cheaper, if they paid rent to a private landlord instead of paying the same amount to the Government in the form of a Land Tax. A land tax consequently differs from all other taxes, for it possesses the excellent quality of providing a large revenue for the State without diminishing the wealth of any class of the community. Those, therefore, are completely in error

—and I recommend this to my hon. Friend behind me—

> who quote the aggregate amount of taxation which is raised in India in order to prove how heavily the people of that country are taxed. At least £20,000,000 per annum is obtained in India by the Land Tax, but it would be as unreasonable to consider this amount as a burden laid upon the people, as it would be to consider that the whole rent which is paid to English landlords in this country is an impost levied on the cultivators of the soil."

In India they nationalised the land centuries ago. The land belongs to the State, and the cultivators of the land pay a certain rent in respect of their tenancies. Whether that rent is an excessive rent or a moderate rent is, of course, a question on which discussion may arise, and on which different opinions may be expressed. Putting it generally, there are two principal assessments in India—the permanent settlement which was made 100 years ago by Lord Cornwallis in Bengal, and which then and for ever fixed the sum the tenants were to pay, and temporary settlements made once in 30 years which have prevailed for a long series of years, and under which the conditions of the land are considered, the cultivated area is ascertained, the price of produce is duly recorded, and the rent is estimated for a period of 30 years. No increase of rent is allowed on improvements made by the tenant himself or improvements arising from expenditure of private money. With regard to the settlement in Bengal, that settlement was fixed 100 years ago at about £3,250,000, and that represented a fair rent then to be paid for the land and its produce. The gross annual rental now received by the landlord is nearly £15,000,000. Hardly any of this increase is due to the action of the zemindars. It has arisen from the increased population, from the industry of the ryots, from the rise in prices, and to a great extent from the money expended by the State for the roads and railways. Now, Sir, the House will see what the position of the Government would be if that settlement had never been made. That large unearned increase of many millions has not gone into the pockets of the cultivator of the soil, but has been received by the zemindars. No advantage has been derived by the ryots from the increased value of the land. That is a system which, as the hon. Member for Kingston has pointed out, is indefensible and is a great loss to the people of India. The Government of India are, I think, to be congratulated that in three-fourths of the districts of India that system does not now prevail. The position of affairs in Bengal has been for years a serious injustice — I might use a stronger word—to the tenants. The tenants have been rack-rented; the zemindars have paid the rent to which I alluded just now to the Government, and have done pretty much what they liked as to the mode of dealing with their tenants. The protection given to tenants in other parts of India practically ceased to exist in Bengal. Inquiry after inquiry by Governor General after Governor General took place upon the question, and eventually the Bengal Tenancy Act was passed in 1885, which recognised the rights of the tenants so far as the future was concerned. The Bill was very much upon the lines of Bills referring to Irish tenants. The measure was passed into law eight or nine years ago, and it is in carrying out that measure, and in completing the Cadastral Survey of a part of Bengal—namely, Behar—that difficulty has arisen. The difficulty has, however, I think, been greatly exaggerated, and I think we may expect that a decision will be arrived at before long which will give satisfaction both to the tenants of Behar and to the zemindars. The Government have taken upon themselves a larger share of the cost of the survey than was originally contemplated, and I do not believe that any further complaints will now be made. But before I pass from Behar I will give a singular illustration of the unwisdom of this settlement. In Behar, where the land revenue was settled on the lowest scale 100 years ago, and where it now falls at the rate of about 10 annas per acre of cultivated land, the rents paid by the cultivators are higher, the pressure on the ryots is heavier, and the condition of the smaller ryots is poorer, than they are in other Provinces where the land revenue is periodically re-settled, and where the average incidence per acre is from 30 to 35 annas. Passing from this local question, I may say generally that the instructions to the officers of the Government are what I mentioned yesterday, that they are to apportion rents with justice and with moderation. I will now give the House figures showing how the amount of the revenue bears upon the condition of the people, taking India as a whole. The gross area of British India now under cultivation is estimated at 196,000,000 acres, and the gross rent paid to the Government in 1894-95 at Rx.25,703,600. Of this cultivated area nearly 13 per cent. bears two or more crops a year. No pasture or grass land is reckoned as cultivated. The total land revenue (Rx.25,703,000) on the total area of cultivated land — apart from fallows and grass lands—falls at an average rate of 1·31 rupees per cultivated acre all over India. The average incidence of land revenue varies in the different Provinces from 0·43 of a rupee per cultivated acre in the Central Provinces to 2·99 (or say 3) rupees per acre in Burma. In special tracts and villages in arid parts of the Deccan, or stony tracts in the Central Provinces, the land revenue is as low as two annas (one-eighth of a rupee) per acre; whereas in town lots in the Calcutta suburbs the rate may sometimes go as high as 40 rupees per acre. The gross value of all the crops is estimated to be Rx.313,500,000 a year. The land revenue represents 8 per cent. of this value. Some authorities put the value of the crops higher, and estimate the total land revenue at 6 per cent. of the gross yield. But the figure taken above is moderate and safe. This estimate takes no account of grass and pasture lands, or of the 75,500,000 head of greater cattle and 30,500,000 head of lesser cattle. The rent is entirely raised upon arable or agricultural land. As compared with the gross value of the crops in India, this revenue cannot be considered excessive. The next item of revenue which I submit to the House as coming within the non-tax revenue is the revenue derived from opium. I am not now going to deal with the merits or demerits of this opium question. The whole question is being considered by a competent and impartial Royal Commission, and I think that both in India and in England the Report of that Commission will be awaited with a great deal of interest, as we shall then have before us the facts of that complicated controversy upon which we shall be able perhaps to form a correct opinion. Speaking now simply as the Finance Minister, I have to tell the House that in 1893 the gross revenue from opium produced Rx.7,993,000. In the preceding year it produced Rx.8,012,000, there being therefore a decrease. I said just now that that was not a tax revenue falling upon the people of India. It is a tax falling upon people who buy the opium from India. The tax upon opium consumed in India forms part of the Excise revenue, and forms no part of the opium revenue. The particular revenue from opium arises from two sources: the taxation of opium which is produced in the native States, and which, passing through Bombay, is charged with a certain pass duty, and the profit which accrues to the Indian Government from the monopoly which they have in the manufacture of opium. Now I come to what I call taxation in the strict sense of the word, and I first take the taxation in regard to salt. It was discussed yesterday, and I am not going to quarrel with its description as a severe tax. That tax produced in 1893 Rx.8,167,000 net. Now, this duty has been raised in the past history of India on all salt, either imported into the country or manufactured in India. There was a great variety in the rates which prevailed, but they eventually settled down to 2 rupees for every 82lbs. of salt. But in 1888, owing to financial exigencies, the taxation was raised to 2½ rupees upon every 82lbs. At that time great fear was expressed that the imposition of this duty would tend to decrease the consumption, which it was said — and I quite agree—would be a great calamity to the people. If the result of that taxation had been to produce such a consequence, it would, in my opinion, have been much to be deprecated. Now, the figures are as follows :—In 1888, when the duty was raised from 2 rupees to 2½ rupees, the consumption in India was 31,474,000 maunds ; in the following year, 33,486,000 ; in 1890, 33,722,000 ; in the next year, 34,851,000 ; and in the year which I am now discussing, 35,451,000. In the last 10 years there has been an increase in the consumption of 18 per cent., whilst the population of India has only advanced 11 per cent. Now, this consumption works out at 10¾lbs. per head. It varies in different Provinces, in some being as much as 18¾lbs. per head, and in some so low as 8lbs. per head, but as showing the actual burden of the tax upon the people of India I take the average consumption at 10¾lbs. per head. Taking the average Indian family at five members the taxation would fall at the rate of 1½ rupees per annum per family, or five annas per head. Do not let me be misunderstood as in any way taking an optimistic view of the tax. Nothing would please me better than to be able to tell the House that the Indian Government were in a position to abolish this tax. I think it would be a very great boon to the people of India to get rid of this tax altogether, but, at the same time, however strong our feeling may be, we must not forget that there is no tax in India upon tobacco or sugar, and that this is practically the only tax which the Indian peasant need pay, unless he indulges in spirits and narcotics. This is practically the only tax levied upon a large proportion of the people of India, and I think we may congratulate ourselves on the encouraging fact that the consumption of salt has not decreased, but has increased. Well, the next item is that coming under the head of stamps. That is very much the same class of taxation as the Chancellor of the Exchequer is familiar with here. This item produced some Rx.4,254,000 net, a very slight increase upon the preceding year. I may observe here that Death Duties, Estate Duties, and Legacy Duties in India are a mine of future revenue still unexplored. The next item is Excise. The Excise Duty in India is raised by duties upon and licences to sell intoxicating liquors. My hon. Friend the Member for Flintshire complained very strongly of the working of the Excise Duties. He made some very strong charges against the collectors of this revenue in India as to the mode in which the tax was collected. Well, Sir, Drink Duties are looked at from two points of view—one from the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and one from the moralist's point of view. I think the desire of every right-minded man is that this revenue should be as high as possible in order to check consumption, and the difficult dividing line of excessive or not sufficient taxation is where smuggling would begin and greater evils would follow. This revenue has considerably increased in the course of the last few years. In 1889 it reached Rx.4,679,000, and now it is Rx.5,210,000. I am informed that this increase has arisen from improved Excise administration. The amount of taxation has very much increased in the last few years, and there has been a great reduction in the use of illicit intoxicants. The licences—and the bulk of the Revenue comes from them—are for spirits made, spirits imported, certain fermented drinks, opium, and narcotics. Ten years ago the total number of shops of all kinds licensed for alcohol and opium was 115,637. Last year the total licences were 102,991, showing a decrease of something like 12,000. The drink bill of the United Kingdom gives a total revenue of £35,000,000 from a population of 39,000,000. This is practically a drink revenue 55½ times greater per head of population than the Revenue raised in India. The number of licences has been, as I have shown already, reduced, and, whereas we find that in England there is a shop licensed to sell intoxicating liquors for every 166 of the population, there is in India a licensed shop to sell these liquors and for opium for every 2,148 of the population. I very much wish my hon. Friend the Member for Cumberland was here, that he might see that, in the darkness of India, there are some gleams of light which he would like to see extended to England. With reference to my hon. Friend's statement as to the policy of the Excise collectors in raising this revenue, and the policy of the Government of India, I can only repeat to the House Lord Cross's Despatch upon this question, which expresses the views of the Home Government, and I believe the views of the Indian Government. He says—

> "I lay down this principle—that any extension of the habit of drinking among the Indian populations is to be discouraged; that the tax on spirits and liquors should be as high as may be possible without giving rise to illicit methods of making and selling liquors; and that, subject to these considerations, a maximum Revenue should be raised from a minimum consumption of intoxicating liquors."

My hon. Friend stated yesterday that he believed that the collectors of this class of revenue were promoted or were degraded according to the amount they received from the population. Well, I have made inquiries into this matter, and I am informed by the India Office that they have no record of any case of a collector having been punished or degraded by reason of bringing in a decreased Excise Revenue. On the contrary, those collectors where the consumption is restricted are the collectors approved by the Government and promoted. I think my hon. Friend, upon consideration, will see that there is no foundation for the charge which, no doubt, he made under a false impression. While talking upon this temperance question, I am rather tempted to make one allusion to our European subjects in India as distinct from the people of India. Of course, the people in whom we are most anxious to encourage temperate habits are the soldiers, to whom drink is the greatest temptation and the greatest ruin. Now, that very distinguished officer, Sir George White, now Commander-in-Chief in India, has just been making a speech dealing with this question. He called the attention of the public to the fact that 22,000 men now belong to the Army Temperance Society, and he worked out these very interesting figures: that out of 1,150 regimental Courts Martial which sat in India last year only 39 sat to try members of the Army Temperance Society; and that if the members of the Society had their fair share of military offences they would have contributed 796 more offenders than they actually did to the total number tried by Court Martial in 1893. Sir George White went on to show how very much the health of the Army in India was improved by abstention from alcoholic liquors, and that the Returns from the hospitals proved this to be the case. I hope I have explained that there is no reason to fear that any stimulus to excessive consumption of intoxicants is given.

Mr. A. O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I shall be glad if the right hon. Gentleman can tell me whether the licences are not sold by auction?

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I am not able to answer that question offhand. The next item is the Customs. Last year they were practically a little less, but not to an amount worth noticing. This year they produce Rx.1,418,000 net. These duties are on arms, liquors, opium, and petroleum, and there is an Export Duty on rice. Practically, the Export Duty on rice is no taxation on the people of India, because it is paid by the consumers. It is the same as that levied in Siam and Cochin China. The Income Tax last year produced Rx.1,640,000 net as against Rx.1,608,000 in the preceding year. That tax has been represented as a very safe index of the poverty of India. My hon. Friend told the House what 1d. would produce in India, and what it would produce in England. Of course, the disproportion is something appalling, even if you throw out of consideration the accumulated wealth of England, and simply treat the two countries on parallel lines. But the incidence of this taxation in India and England is widely different, and from one you cannot draw a conclusion as to the other. In India the tax is paid by a limited class of the population. Practically it is paid on salaries, pensions, Companies' income, and, of course, on the income of ordinary trades and professions. But the great trade of India—the trade by which India lives, from which it draws the bulk of its income, and upon which depends entirely its prosperity—is the trade of agriculture. There is no Income Tax on the ownership of land, on the occupation of land, or on the sale of the produce of the land. When you strike out that enormous item you see that you cannot draw a parallel with reference to England. Again, when an Englishman saves money he invests it, and it becomes an Income Tax-bearing property. But those hoarded millions in India—hoards of gold and silver of which the amount is not known, and of which there are no reliable statistics, except those as to the amount which has been absorbed—those hoards which must represent some hundreds of millions sterling, pay no Income Tax. Upon these grounds I reject the idea that any comparison can be drawn between England and India. The next item is Provincial Rates. The House will recollect that these rates are collected with and by the same agency as the Imperial Revenue. They are, after being collected, re-apportioned to the Provincial Authorities, and spent by them. They all tend to swell the amount of the general taxation of the country; but in contrasting the taxation of India with England you would have to add a great proportion of the local taxation to the English total. Last year these provincial rates produced Rx.3,643,000, which shows a slight increase, but nothing abnormal. The last item of taxation is the registration on the transfer of land, which produced the small amount of Rx.216,000. These are the items which I have described to the House as taxation revenue. The amount in the year just closed was Rx.24,355,000, as against Rx.23,868,000 in the preceding year, or an increase of Rx.487,000, practically Rx.500,000. The commercial services form the last item I shall mention. I shall have to say something about railways when dealing with expenditure, but I may say now that there is no income from railways, but a very large debit charge. They were worked at a very considerable profit, but the debenture payments and the interest upon share capital have to be remitted to England, and the cost of exchange turns the profit into a loss. So far as the Post Office is concerned, last year it produced Rx.1,489,000 gross; the Telegraphs Rx.938,000, and the Mints Rx.310,000. The upshot of these statistics is that the burden of the taxation upon the people of India for the year 1893 is something like Rx.25,787,000—I have not deducted from it the cost of collection—and this gives a taxation per head of the population of one rupee two annas and six pies. The estimated net expenditure of the Budget for 1892–3 was Rx.49,435,200 as against an estimated net revenue of Rx.49,581,800, showing an estimated surplus of Rx.146,600. That estimated surplus, however, turned out to be non-existent, and the result of a balance between the actual revenue and the actual expenditure was a deficiency of Rx.833,412, due to a very large extent to the fall in the rate of exchange. The net revenue shows an increase of Rx.2,023,881, which was due in a great measure to the large augmentation of the net receipts from opium; but there was also a satisfactory improvement under other heads. But the increase of expenditure has wiped out the anticipated surplus and left a net deficit. Of the increase of expenditure by Rx.3,004,000 beyond the sum estimated in the Budget, nearly Rx.2,000,000 arises from exchange, leaving only Rx.1,026,000 to be explained under the various items which appear in the Statement the Committee have before them. The Budget of 1893 was based on a rate of exchange of 1s. 4d., and the rate realised was rather lower than 1s. 3d., so the House will see at once where a great deal of the loss occurred. The Budget Estimate of 1893–4, as revised down to the present time, shows a net revenue of Rx.50,253,000; a net expenditure of Rx.52,046,000, and a deficit of Rx.1,792,800. That is only Rx.197,700 worse than the original Budget Estimate, which estimated a deficit of Rx.1,595,100. There has been a reduction in opium, a reduction in salt revenue, and a reduction in the rates; but, on the other hand, there has been an increase in the Land Revenue, in Stamps, in Excise, and a small increase in assessed taxes. Although the revenue was more, the expenditure was also more, and that made the net deficiency more than was expected by Rx.197,000. That is not a very satisfactory statement for 1894. But that is not the Budget now before the House, and it is not necessary that I should now go through it in detail. Notwithstanding that there were moderate increases of revenue and considerable reductions of expenditure in the year 1894, and the rate of taxation was in no way altered, the deficit of the preceding year, which was Rx.833,000, has become Rx.1,792,800, and I think I am right in saying that that deficit represents a further loss from the fall in the exchange value of the rupee. I come now, Mr. Mellor, to what is the more legitimate part of the Budget Statement—the statement for the forthcoming year, 1895. I have just told the House that the net expenditure for 1894 was Rx.52,046,000, or, in round figures, Rx.52,000,000. The rate of exchange for that year was a little above 1s. 2½d. In the Budget for this year it was taken in India at 1s. 2d., and this reduction in the gold value of the rupee involves an increase of expenditure of Rx.1,052,600, which, owing to a slight increase in the sterling expenditure, is raised to Rx.1,053,000; and therefore, assuming the expenditure at the same rate as it was last year, instead of the Budget continuing at Rx.52,046,000, we have to deal with an expenditure of Rx.53,099,000. There are various increases and decreases in the revenue and expenditure, but they are all of small amount, and I will not trouble you with them. The result is, that I have to deal with an expenditure of Rx.53,321,000; against which I take the same basis of revenue as last year, and, allowing only for a reduction of Rx.449,000, we have a deficit of Rx.3,517,000 this year. The Committee will bear in mind that for 1893 the deficit was Rx.833,000; in 1894 Rx.1,793,000, and for 1895 it is Rx.3,517,000. The question is, how can we meet that deficit? What can we do in the way of reducing expenditure? I presume that the first duty and legitimate function of the Finance Department of a Government, when they have to face a deficit of this character, is to see what they can do in the way of reducing expenditure. They must ask themselves whether they are bound to keep up such a large expenditure, and whether they cannot in any way reduce that expenditure in order to enable them to meet the deficit. Now I have to touch upon another thorny subject, and I must trouble the Committee with a little explanation. A discussion was raised by hon. Members yesterday upon what was called the Famine Insurance Fund. If ever words were intended to conceal the real operations of a Department, the words "Famine Insurance Fund" were successful for that purpose. The Committee must understand there is no such thing as a "Famine Insurance Fund" at all. It does not exist, and never has existed. Therefore, when complaints are made that the Government of India have appropriated money, which is sacredly set apart for such a purpose, to increase the ordinary Revenue, all I can say is that they are entirely unfounded. There are many authorities on this subject. I have here in detail the speeches which were made when this fund was started. I have got a summary of those speeches made by the distinguished author of the scheme himself. I will endeavour to state it in a sentence or two for the benefit of the Committee, and hon. Members will then form their own judgments as to whether my statement is correct or not. In the year when this scheme was proposed to the Indian Council by Sir John Strachey, who was then Finance Minister, the Government had come to the conclusion that the cost of a famine coming once in 10 years represented something like Rx.15,000,000. That calamity involved, of course, the raising by loan of a very large sum of money in order to meet that exceptional expenditure. Sir John Strachey's scheme was this: that the Budget in India should contemplate an annual surplus, or what we should call in this country a Sinking Fund, of Rx.1,500,000, and that this fund should be devoted in the first instance to the relief of any actual famine expenditure incurred in that year; and, in the next place, that any further sum should be directly expended in the construction of unproductive railways—I mean unproductive from a commercial point of view, but works calculated to protect the country from famine—and, lastly, for the reduction of existing debt, or avoidance of debt otherwise about to be incurred, so as to form a set-off against the borrowing that might be expected in a year when famine arose. Let me read you what Sir John Strachey, the highest authority on this question, says:—

> "This policy of insurance against famine so simple in its nature has been constantly misunderstood. It has been stated that a separate fund was constituted into which certain revenues were paid, which could only be drawn out for specified purposes. No such idea was ever entertained. The Famine Insurance Fund of which people have often talked never existed. The intention was nothing more than the annual application of surplus revenue to the extent of Rx.1,500,000 for the purposes I have described."

Thus, whereas the Government of India had year by year been borrowing money for their railway and other works, it was not necessary that the Rx.1,500,000 should be applied in reduction of the debt, and that another Rx.1,500,000 should be borrowed: the one was simply a set-off against to the other. What has been done under this Famine Insurance Fund? Let me refer you to page 11 of my Explanatory Statement. This fund has been in operation since the year 1882, and during this period of 14 years there has been spent in famine relief Rx.304,409; upon construction of protective irrigation works Rx.1,776,863; upon construction of protective railways there has been charged under famine relief and insurance Rx.5,482,943, and charged under revenue railway account Rx.3,186,902; and for reduction or avoidance of debt Rx.5,327,299. Therefore, even allowing for a deduction, which I am going to mention immediately, Rx.16,000,000 has been appropriated out of the income of India during the last 14 years for the purpose of preventing famine. There is one other authority I should like to quote on this question, and that is the present Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, who was himself Secretary of the Famine Commission, and who, next to Sir John Strachey, knew most about it, perhaps, of any of the men in India who had the management of it. This gentleman knows how the money was spent, and this year he, in dealing with this case, made this strong statement—

> "The calculations made by the Famine Commission showed that the provision of 20,000 miles of railway would suffice to ensure the means of sure and speedy transport of food into every part of India that is liable to be afflicted with famine."

He proceeded to say—

> "By the operation of this system 4,896 miles of protective railway for the purposes of insurance against famine have been constructed, and we have in 15 years carried out almost all the schemes held to be necessary for the protection of the country against famine. Speaking with such authority as attaches to me as Secretary to that Commission, I do not hesitate to say that the only considerable spot in India on which I could now lay my finger as both liable to severe famine and insufficiently protected against it, is Orissa. . . When the East Coast railway is finished, I believe that the work of railway extension, with the special object of famine protection, will be completed."

Whether those opinions be sound or unsound, hon. Members will admit that, coming from Sir Charles Elliott, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, they come from a very high authority. When the Government of India are charged with having misappropriated funds intended for one purpose to another, and of having been guilty of most reprehensible conduct, I think hon. Members will say that I have proved that this is not the case. The Famine Fund is a surplus, and you cannot deal with a surplus until you have a surplus. This year there is no surplus revenue in India. There is no surplus of Rx.1,500,000. Therefore, if the Government had intended this year to appropriate this Rx.1,500,000, which Sir Charles Elliott says is not needed, we should not have been able to do that without putting on additional taxation.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there was not for 1892-93 an amount of Rx.1,686,000, which were collected from certain assessed taxes which were specially raised for the purposes of this famine insurance?

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: My hon. Friend can discuss that when I have done my statement. I cannot admit his premises at all. This criticism which was raised yesterday the hon. Gentleman can raise again if he likes. What I have to deal with is that there is an expenditure at this moment of Rx.3,500,000 more than the revenue. Therefore, the first thing which the Finance Minister has said is, "I will stop this expenditure this year." I am sorry that that has had to be done. I should like these protective works to be carried still further; I should have liked the debt to have been paid off. The Indian Government will provide for certain irrigation works which they know to be necessary, and they will also pay the net charge on certain protective railways, and the aggregate of these provisions will be Rx.423,800. The reduction in the amount to be expended under the head of Famine Relief and Insurance this year is, therefore, Rx.1,083,300. The next reductions are Rx.188,000 in military works, Rx.263,000 in civil works, and in special defence works Rx.135,000. The Indian Government have further called upon the Provincial Administrations to submit to a reduction of their balances. This is rather a complicated question; but, if the Committee will allow me, I will state the figures in one or two sums. I think it will be sufficient for the purposes of this Debate. In the scheme of decentralisation which is now carried on in India large portions of the Revenue are handed over to the Local Authorities, who are responsible for a large portion of the expenditure of the country. About 25 per cent. of the gross expenditure is now managed by the Local Authorities. The Indian Government requires all these Local Authorities to have a minimum balance. This is a wise precaution. It is to prevent extravagance and to prevent works being undertaken which the Local Authorities have not the funds to defray. They have asked the Local Authorities this year to hand over from their treasuries a sum of Rx.405,000; but the latter will still have after the appropriation Rx.2,343,000, or an excess of Rx.1,250,000 beyond the figure which is required as a minimum balance. Therefore, I think the Indian Finance Minister is justified in saying that the Indian Provinces must share with the Imperial Treasury the heavy burden of this terrible deficit. After all these economies, the Exchequer will be left with a deficit of Rx.1,442,000. That deficit can only be met by additional taxation, and it was decided that a Customs Duty of 5 per cent. should be levied on imports into India, with the exception of cotton goods. These duties were estimated to produce Rx.1,140,000, leaving a final deficit of Rx.302,000 for the current year. I am aware that a good number of people are of opinion that the Government ought not to have interfered with the original intention of the Indian Authorities to levy a duty on all imports into India without any exception; and that the exception of cotton goods is one which cannot be justified. We have heard, both in this House and also in another place, that this is felt to be a very great injustice by the people of India. ["Hear, hear!" *from the Opposition Benches.*] I should like to ask, Who is going to pay the taxes on these imports? The people of India, the consumers in India, and no one else. If I construe rightly what is passing in the minds of persons who have spoken and written on this question, it amounts to this: that this is a tax which would have been paid by the people of Lancashire, and that no corresponding burden would be paid by the people in India. Whether Import Duties are right or wrong, whatever duty you levy on cotton goods must inevitably be paid by the people who wear these cotton goods in India. The tax would therefore be a tax upon the people of India, and not upon the Lancashire manufacturer. It may, of course, affect the amount of imports by raising the price of cotton goods; but, as a matter of fact, the duty will be paid by the consumer. The one complaint of the people of Lancashire prior to 1879 was against protective duties being levied on their goods in favour of the native manufacturer, and Lord Salisbury in his Despatch on this question said—

> "It is impossible to believe that under these conditions the duty can be permanently maintained. The entire acceptance of the system of Free Trade by England is incompatible with the continuance of an exception apparently so marked. Parliament, when its attention is drawn to the matter, will not allow the only remnant of Protection within the direct jurisdiction of the English Government to be a protective duty which, so far as it operates at all, is hostile to English manufacturers."

Again, at a later date Lord Salisbury said—

> "The Import Duty on cotton manufactures is, on general principles, liable to objection as tending to operate as a protective duty in favour of the native manufacturer. The removal of this duty is of material importance both to India and to England."

This House has by solemn Resolution declared that it will not sanction a protective duty on cotton goods. Therefore the position I have taken up is that the imposition of such a duty is a step which must not be taken until the House has had some opportunity of discussing the question. But, if this duty is paid by the people of India, what is the position of the Government? We say that, if you are going to tax the people of India, the product of that tax must go into the treasuries of India, and that you must not tax the people of India to put money into the pockets of the manufacturers of Bombay. The broad principle of protective duties is this: that the native manufacturer raises his prices to within an appreciable distance below the protective duty, so as to have an additional profit to put into his own pocket at the expense of the consumer, and at the expense of the taxpayer. This Government is not influenced by the Lancashire vote. I repudiate on behalf of the English Government on both sides of the House the imputation that they would place the Lancashire vote before their policy on matters affecting the interests of India. Questions of this sort must be decided on higher grounds. Speaking for myself and my predecessor, Lord Kimberley, I say that our sole motive has been to prevent the imposition of a protective duty which would inflict a burden on the consumer in India, without a corresponding addition to the revenue of India. I have said all along, and I say now that, if the manufacturers of India are prepared to submit to a countervailing duty which will destroy the element of protection, I do not see why the Import Duty should not be imposed. I know that there are difficulties in this question; I know certain descriptions of goods are made in Lancashire and not made in India, while others are made in India and not in Lancashire; but, if there be any necessity for increasing the taxation of India, I see no reason why this tax could not be fairly and justly imposed, and at the same time deprived of any protective character, so that it shall go into the Treasury of India and not into the pockets of the manufacturers. Then no injustice would be done to the English manufacturer on the one hand or to the Indian consumer on the other. That is all I have to say on the estimated Revenue for 1894-5. The estimated expenditure of next year, after making the deductions to which I have referred, is Rx.51,245,400. The principal items in round figures are:—Interest, Rx.3,755,000; Civil Departments, Rx.13,347,000; Miscellaneous Civil Charges, Rx.4,771,000; Railway Revenue Account, Rx.2,130,000; Buildings, Roads, and Irrigation, Rx.5,306,000; Army Services and Special Defence Works, Rx.23,102,000, the net total being, as I have said, Rx.51,245,400. I want now to call attention to one fact, and that is, that of this heavy expenditure Rx.12,523,100 are due entirely to loss on exchange. I have given, on page 12 of my Explanatory Statement, a Table showing the amount of net sterling expenditure in England in recent years, the average rate at which remittances from India have been effected, and the loss on exchange. From that it appears that, going back 10 years, the loss on exchange was Rx.3,500,000. It has now risen to Rx.12,500,000, and every decrease of a penny in the value of the rupee means an additional charge of Rx.2,400,000. There are one or two other items of expenditure with which I should like to deal, chiefly with reference to the Army and home charges. Great complaint has been made by several of my hon. Friends of the increase in the military expenditure. After the statement I made yesterday that a Committee will be appointed to examine the question of expenditure, it would not be prudent of me to go into a discussion which the House could only carry on upon imperfect data. There has been a very large increase in military expenditure in India. During the last 10 years we have increased the Army in India by 10,000 European and 20,000 Native soldiers. I could tell the House, item by item, if there were time, what has been the actual expenditure; but, without going into all the details of what has been expended, I think that the House will find in the enormous sum paid for exchange, in the normal increase in ordinary expenditure, and in the addition to the Army, an explanation of the very largely increased expenditure. With reference to home charges, as far as my experience at the India Office is concerned, though it is a short one, I find that there is as strict a scrutiny of expenditure in India as of expenditure at home. Some hon. Member said yesterday that by a stroke of my pen I could spend £1,000,000. I could do nothing of the kind. I cannot spend £10 by a stroke of my pen. That is the one thing the Secretary of State cannot do; he cannot spend 1s. without the consent of the majority of his Council. He has no power to override his Council in that matter. I can assure the House that we have put our foot resolutely down against any increased expenditure. I lately sent a strong Despatch to the Government of India protesting against any proposal for increasing salaries or establishments. We are face to face with this enormous deficit, and it is our duty to cut down expenditure as rigidly as if the same state of things arose in Downing Street. There was last year, apart from exchange, a reduction of Rx.102,000, and in 1893–4 a further reduction of Rx.424,000 in expenditure on purely military purposes. I have one word to say on the debt. The closing of the Mint and the cessation of the sale of bills compelled the Government of India to borrow money in this country for the purpose of meeting current expenditure, and in round figures we raised £1,386,000 on debentures, we raised £6,000,000 on bills, of which we have already paid off £4,000,000, and we created new Stock to the amount of £6,000,000 Three per Cents. That is practically an increase in the debt of £9,386,000 in the year. That was not, however, a real increase of debt to that amount. It was debt temporarily borrowed in this country as against money lying in the Treasury of India, and it is not fair to consider that without having some regard to the balances in India. The cash balances in India in April, 1893, amounted to Rx.15,000,000. On March 1, 1894, they had increased to Rx.26,000,000. There would, no doubt, have been a loss in the transmission of that money to England, and the debt was created because it was considered unwise so to remit it. But against the liability there is a corresponding deposit in India. I will just state the exact position of the Debt at the present time. The Debt in England is £114,114,000. The Debt in India is Rx.124,114,000. I was asked yesterday, "Why don't you borrow in silver?" Well, more than half the debt of India is a silver debt. The debt consists partly of the war debt, to which a fearful amount was added during the Mutiny, and partly of the amount due to railways and irrigation. What are our assets against that debt? The debt in India is Rx.124,000,000, and our assets Rx.147,000,000. Thus there is actually in India a surplus of assets over liabilities. In England the Debt is £114,000,000, and the assets £65,000,000, so that there is an excess of liability in England of £49,000,000, and the net result is that there is an uncovered debt of something like Rx.25,500,000. Now, Sir, when it is considered that we are dealing with a poor country, with an enormous military and Imperial expenditure, and with a vast outlay on railways and irrigation works, I venture to say that that is not unsatisfactory. I doubt whether there is any country in Europe showing anything approaching to such an encouraging state of affairs. The next point is with reference to the closing of the Mints. That step was taken in consequence of the great depreciation in the value of the rupee and the financial difficulty in which the Government of India was placed. It was taken upon the advice of a Committee composed of the most competent men that could be appointed to investigate such a question, who recommended the Government at home not to refuse the proposal of the Government of India to suspend the coinage of silver. The effect of that step was, in the first instance, to very much reduce the price of silver. It also very much affected the exports and imports. It reduced exports and stimulated imports. It is believed that the repeal of the Sherman Act would have produced a catastrophe of the greatest magnitude if the Mints had remained open. Others may say that if the Mints had not been closed there would not have been that fall in the price of silver. That is, of course, a question of the might-have-beens, and what we have to deal with are the facts of the case. I may remind the Committee of the effect of the closing of the Mints upon the sale of bills for the 30 weeks from January 31, 1894. If those bills had been sold at the silver price they would have produced £1,820,000 sterling less than they have produced, and the deficit would be so much more. We were told in the Debates at the commencement of the Session that the effect of this step would be to dislocate trade. Well, what has been the effect of this step on the trade of India? During the first quarter, from July to September, the export of merchandise went down Rx.646,000 below the average of the previous five years. The imports of merchandise enormously increased; the import of silver increased, the gold import decreased, and the result was that for that quarter the balance of net exports was Rx.3,046,000 less than the average of five years. From October to December—and the Committee must remember that the sale of Council bills had been virtually suspended in August, and there were still hardly any sales—there was a decrease in the balance of trade of Rx.3,537,000. At the end of January the Secretary of State resumed the sale of bills, and the moment that was done the tide turned, and in the quarter from January to March the decrease was only Rx.1,755,000. But when we come to the quarter just closed, from April to June, the first quarter during which the experiment has been fairly tried, and during which there has been no suspension in the sale of Council bills, the normal state of things was resumed. The exports of merchandise during that quarter amounted to Rx.30,268,000, as against an average of Rx.28,848,000; and the surplus exports, including treasure, were Rx.5,020,000 above the average. He would be a very bold man who would dogmatise on the difficult question of the currency of India and the question of the closing of the Mints, but these are the facts which I submit to the Committee. I think it is too soon yet to form any judgment on the subject, and I think the experiment has not yet been fully tried. I wish to state publicly, however, that we have no intention of re-opening the Mints for the coinage of silver. We mean the experiment to be carried out to the end, and, so far as it has proceeded, we see no reason to be alarmed. The great work of Irrigation is proceeding satisfactorily. The total capital sum expended up to the close of the year 1891-92 was Rx.28,321,000; in 1892-93, Rx.602,000; in 1893-94, Rx.770,000; and we estimate to expend in 1894-95 Rx.616,000, which will make the total expenditure up to that date Rx.30,309,000. The percentage of net revenue last year on the capital outlay was exactly 5 per cent. The receipts of the Post Office for last year were Rx.1,488,000; the expenditure Rx.1,518,000. The extension of Post Office business is proceeding very rapidly. The number of letters and post cards passing through the Post Office in India last year was 311,000,000; of newspapers, 26,600,000; of parcels, 2,170,000; and of book and pattern packets, 12,149,000. The general correspondence Returns, of which these are a summary, show an increase of over 12,500,000 of articles carried by post last year as compared with the preceding year. Of this increase nearly 4,500,000 were due to letters, and 7,000,000 to post cards. The telegraph returns are equally satisfactory. The total capital outlay to the end of last year was Rx.5,434,000, and the percentage of net revenue on the capital outlay was 4·46 per cent. The Indian railways are the one subject on which I will now trouble the Committee, as I feel the greatest interest in them. We have now 18,000 miles of railway open. I know some of my friends are very much dissatisfied with the progress of the railways. So am I. I think nothing is wanted more in India, so far as constructive works are concerned, than a very large increase of railway communication. Such an increase of railway communication will be a great boon to all classes. The capital outlay up to the end of the year on the Indian railways is Rx.233,000,000. The number of passengers carried last year was 135,000,000, the number of tons of goods cerried 28,000,000, the gross receipts Rx.23,800,000, the working expenses Rx.11,200,000, the net receipts Rx.12,659,032, and the percentage of net receipts on capital cost 5·44. That includes a large amount of unproductive capital for military and other purposes. While, however, the railways gave in India a return of about 5½ per cent. on their capital cost, the expense of paying in England the interest in gold is so heavy that the result of the Railway Revenue Account is to impose a considerable addition to the Imperial expenditure. In 1892 this additional net charge was only Rx.316,000; in 1893 it rose to Rx.1,847,000; in 1894 it fell to Rx.1,597,000, and the estimate for the present year is a net charge of Rx.2,130,000. The trade results for the year are satisfactory. The total foreign trade of India in 1892 was Rx.196,000,000; in 1893 Rx.197,000,000—I mean exports and imports; and in 1894, Rx.206,000,000. Upon the whole, I think the Budget that I have had to give to the Committee is a Budget which, although it has some very depressing features, has some very encouraging features. Yesterday I was asked not to take a pessimistic view. I hope I do not, and I likewise hope I do not take an unfairly optimistic view. The great difficulty is the depreciation of silver. Two-thirds of the trade of India is with gold-using countries; and I think that sooner or láter—perhaps the sooner the better—India must come to have a gold standard. As a matter of fact, the trade of India with England and all gold-using countries is on a gold basis. I think, upon the whole, apart from the question of exchange, the general position of Indian finance, both in commerce, in public works, and in all its special interests, is encouraging. My speech has been necessarily confined to the material progress of the country, though I could say a good deal upon its moral progress, which has been very great. On the whole, I submit these Estimates to the Committee with confidence, and I thank the Committee for the kindness and endurance with which they have listened to this most unduly extended speech, and I conclude by submitting the usual Resolution.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1893, was Rx.90,172,438; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.91,005,850; that there was an excess of Expenditure over Revenue of Rx.833,412; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,986,290."—(*Mr. Secretary Fowler.*)

*Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, he was sure the Committee would feel that no endurance had been displayed by those who had sat through the statement of his right hon. Friend. They all had expected that his right hon. Friend would apply to Indian finance that clearness of head which he had shown in dealing with English finance, and especially with local finance, and certainly those who had sat through his speech had been rewarded by the absolute clearness with which it had been marked. The question would be very widely asked in India, if not in this country, what was the exact meaning of the promise the Secretary of State gave yesterday to inquire into the expenditure of India? The right hon. Gentleman had objected, and very naturally, to a general fishing inquiry into the whole administration of India, and had said the responsibility for the policy pursued in India must rest upon the Government. So strongly did he (Sir C. Dilke) feel that to be the case that he would have more confidence if his right hon. Friend told the Committee that he was going to institute such an inquiry in his own person, with a view to making up his own mind as to the expenditure of India. He would have more faith in the result of that inquiry than in that of any inquiry by a Committee of the House. He knew that Committees of the House of Commons were apt to produce a large amount of excellent evidence that nobody ever read and recommendations that were not acted upon. It would be asked in India what this Committee was to do, and the question was one which deserved an answer. Some of his friends and some people in India had suggested that important economies might be effected, and that an absolute improvement in the government of India might be brought about by getting rid of the special Governments of Madras and Bombay and replacing them by Lieutenant Governors, who were sufficient for Bengal, the North-West Provinces, and the Punjaub. Were the Committee to have power to inquire into expenditure upon such heads as these, which could not be inquired into without laying bare the whole foundations of policy pursued in India? There were other very much smaller questions, which were nevertheless very large questions of policy, that might come before the Committee. There was no necessity to pay for a church establishment for civil purposes in India, and he would like to know whether questions of that description were to be within the scope of the inquiry? If so, that raised the question of policy, and the same question would arise in the discussion of the other matters to which he had referred. His right hon. Friend the Indian Secretary alluded to the admirable results obtained in Mysore under native Government, a Government which might be called Parliamentary Government, the only example which existed in India. Would it be in the power of the Committee to take evidence upon such questions as the extension to different parts of India of similar systems of Government under local administration? But to take another instance which the Secretary for India quoted, that of the military expenditure. How far was this Committee to have power to inquire into that branch of the expenditure of India? A document had been submitted to the House by his hon. Friends behind him—a document with which, on this point of military expenditure, he could not agree. But would the Committee have power to inquire whether the military expenditure was necessary or not? There were people who thought the expenditure unnecessary, and their opinions were largely shared by great numbers of people in India and in this country, and who really thought in any inquiry of this kind the whole question of the military expenditure should be considered. He himself was rather one of those who believed that it was impossible to economise under the present system, but that it might be possible to do so by changing the military system, and making it at the same time more efficient. But if the inquiry was to go into matters of this kind it would be one of enormous magnitude, going into the whole foundations of English policy in India, and be of such a nature that he would prefer to see it conducted by the right hon. Gentleman himself.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Sir, I must express my hearty concurrence with the opinion expressed by several hon. Gentlemen that the Committee has listened with the greatest interest to the able and singularly lucid statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India. I venture also to think that the Committee have gathered from that statement a feeling of something more than interest; they have had great satisfaction, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, that the financial position of India at the present moment is not so difficult as it was apprehended some time ago it might likely be in. The gist of the right hon. Gentleman's statement was that there was a deficit of Rx.800,000 in 1893, a deficit of Rx.1,700,000 in 1894, and in 1895 a deficit of no less than Rx.3,000,000, which by various expedients the right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in reducing to something like Rx.300,000. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to be of opinion that, apart from the question of exchange, the financial position of India was not altogether unsatisfactory. But surely, Sir, it is the question of exchange which lies at the very root of financial difficulties in India at the present time. That opinion has been expressed from year to year in the clearest and most emphatic terms by persons thoroughly competent to express an opinion on the subject, and yet you do nothing to cure what lies at the root of the whole difficulty—namely, the fall in the price of silver. I, for one, am not able to share in the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman as to the financial position of India in the future. The right hon. Gentleman gave the Committee interesting information with regard to the recent sale of Council bills, and he reminded us that no great period has elapsed since he found himself confronted with this difficulty: that he was unable to sell these Council bills at all. Happily, that is not the case at present. The improvement which we are glad to recognise in that respect appears to me to be mainly due to two or three circumstances, upon some of which the right hon. Gentleman did not dwell at all, and to others to which he only referred in the most partial manner. In the last few months during which the Council bills have been selling was embraced the busy season of the year. The Government have had the advantage of what is called the export season, which, I suppose, is hardly yet completed. It is during this season that exports are expected to increase, and, as a matter of fact, they always do increase. In addition to this, there is another circumstance which the right hon. Gentleman mentioned, but upon which he only dwelt for a moment, and that is that during the last few months there have been exports of gold from India to England which have been unusually and abnormally large. In addition to this, I know it is held by many people engaged in business, and who are competent to discuss opinions on this subject, that the war which has unfortunately broken out between China and Japan has probably had some effect tending in the same direction. Be that as it may, there happily remains the fact that the Government have been able to sell bills at price, and to that extent they are to be congratulated in having escaped, at all events for a time, from what threatened at one time to be a very grave disaster as one of the first results of their policy in closing the Mints. These great exports of gold, in my judgment, are a very important factor in the question at the present time, and a factor which was not foreseen by anyone, and which certainly was neither foreseen nor contemplated by the Government at the time they adopted the policy which thay have pursued. This is a very important and remarkable fact, and deserves the careful consideration of the Committee. For what I find is this: that while in 1893 there were net imports of gold into India to the extent of 188,000 tens of rupees, for the first six months of the present year there have been net exports of gold from India to no less an extent than 3,001,000 tens of rupees, and that great and abnormal export of gold from India is increasing.

*Mr. H. H. FOWLER: The net export of gold from India for the first quarter of the present year, from January to March, was Rx.515,000. In the next quarter, ending 1st July, it was Rx.1,919,000, so that I believe the right hon. Gentleman is half-a-million in excess.

Mr. CHAPLIN: According to my figures, and I venture to think they are reliable, the export of gold from India to 1st July, 1894, was 3,001,000 tens of rupees, and in the month of July alone it was 567,000 tens of rupees. However, this is a matter which can easily be cleared up from sources with regard to which there can be no mistake. But whether the right hon. Gentleman is right or I am right it diminishes by very little the important fact to which I am calling attention. This great export of gold appears to be a matter of extreme importance from whatever point of view it may be regarded. And for this reason: The Committee must remember that the admitted object of the policy of Her Majesty's Government in closing the Mints in India was to establish a gold standard in that country. But in order to make that standard effective it is obvious to everyone that there must be a vast stock of gold remaining in the country. The question, therefore, arises at once, Are these exports likely to continue in the future or are they not? Because, if they are going to continue, it is quite obvious that the establishment of a gold standard in that country becomes a matter of most extreme difficulty, if not absolutely hopeless and impossible. If, on the other hand, these great exports of gold are going to cease, what is going to happen? We say that the total exports from India *pro tanto* are going to diminish; the market for the sale of bills will be proportionately limited and reduced, and you will again be placed in the same position which you occupied not many months ago—namely, you will again be in danger of a collapse of your policy of closing the Mints. It is a very curious fact in connection with this question that it looks as if the first step of the Government in the financial policy they adopted in India—namely, the closing of the Mints—was saved from disaster by circumstances which were particularly unforeseen by them at the time they adopted that policy; and what is still more curious than that perhaps is this: that this very circumstance which saved them from disaster at the time, if it continues will render hopeless and impossible the main object of the policy which they had in view—namely, the establishment of a gold standard in that country. The whole position, to my mind, is one of the greatest interest, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not think I am not justified in asking two or three questions upon this point. The first question I would ask is this: Has the right hon. Gentleman any information whatever which he could give the House as to the source from which these abnormal exports of gold are being derived at the present time? Does he expect, or is he able to form any expectation as to whether they are likely to continue or to cease in the future? That is the important point, and it leads me to put this further inquiry: If these exports of gold should continue, is it still the intention of the Government to adhere to their policy of establishing a gold standard in India? If that is so, where do they propose to get the gold which would be absolutely necessary to effect it? If, on the other hand, these exports should cease, are we to understand that the policy enumerated to-night, that the Government will not interfere in any way with the closing of the Mints, is still to hold good? If that is so, and if in that case the market for the sale of your bills is seriously affected, how does the Government propose to restore their financial equilibrium in India? These, I think, are legitimate inquiries which we are entitled to make on this occasion, and to which I believe the Committee will await with interest the response of the Government. While I am upon the question of exports from India, there is another inquiry which I desire to make of the Government. This question of exports was discussed, in more or less detail, last year. The right hon. Gentleman may recollect that my right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's (Mr. Goschen), who, unhappily, is not present to-day, took part in those Debates, and he put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer a question the pertinence of which will be obvious to everybody to-day. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in the speech which he had made just before had pointed out that in the difficult position in which the Government found themselves placed—I have his very words here—the Government were looking for an alteration in the exports from India and a consequent demand for Council bills; and he said also, that if the exports became much larger in the next few months that would lead to the sale of bills. Thereupon my right hon. Friend the Member for St. George's put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer this question—

> "Can you reasonably expect that in the next few months exportation will so increase that it will not merely prevent such a thing as has now happened happening next year, but will enable you to clear off the arrears?"

To that the Chancellor of the Exchequer replied—

"I am able to give an answer to that question which I think will be satisfactory,"

and then he proceeded to show the grounds upon which he expected that these results would follow. Now, what the Committee would like to know is this: Do the Government still adhere to that opinion which was expressed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year? And I ask the question for this reason—you must remember that when you came to Parliament last year with a Bill by which you asked the House of Commons to give further borrowing powers to the Government of India to the extent of £10,000,000, you then gave us an assurance that the loan was to be a temporary loan, and was to be in no sense whatever regarded as a transaction of a permanent character. Is that still the view of the Government? Is that £10,000,000 to be a temporary loan, or is it now to be of the nature of a permanent loan? If it is to be of the nature of a permanent loan, we may fairly ask the Government to explain to us how it is that they came to mislead Parliament so entirely on the subject last year. Now, with the permission of the House, I propose to turn for a few moments to another subject. The right hon. Gentleman pointed in the course of his speech to the fact that the deficit in the present year was great, and he gave us reasons for holding the opinion which most of us share, that when the Government found themselves placed in this position of difficulty and confronted by a great deficit, it was their duty to make all legitimate reductions that were in their power. But I venture to say that on this point a great deal depends on what may be considered legitimate or illegitimate. And how have the reductions been effected in the present case? I gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that they have been effected by the use of the funds intended for what is called famine insurance, by the abandonment of public works, by reduction sin military expenditure, and by other expedients which appear to me likely to be injurious to the progress of India. Only yesterday the right hon. Gentleman boasted to the House of the immense development which had been made in the construction of railways in India in the last 30 years. He will be the first to admit that it is of enormous importance to the future welfare of the country that that development should be continued. Well, I should like to ask, in view of the reductions that are now being made—in view of the use to which the funds for famine insurance and other funds are applied—what is the amount of railways he proposes to construct in India during the present year, or are no railways at all to be constructed?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: No.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I understand that some railway works are to be constructed. But I assume that they will be of the most limited description. Therefore, we should like to know how the mileage of the railways that are to be constructed during the present year compares with the mileage of railways made in the past year or with the ordinary average of mileage? Again, the right hon. Gentleman yesterday referred to the great advantages of improved sanitation. He pointed to how much had been done in this respect in India, and he did so with great pride. But when I heard him do so my mind at once reverted to a paragraph in one of the Blue Books which had been presented within the last two or three days. The paragraph occurs in a speech delivered by Sir Griffith Evans, speaking in Council on March 24th, 1894, in respect to certain reductions. Sir Griffith said—

"The barracks required in Upper Burmah will not be built; the sanitary measures required for the Army in India will not be carried out, and, worst of all, the proposed improved arrangements for water supply for the troops all over India must stand over. This means preventible sickness and preventible death among our troops, and the dreadful scourge of enteric fever is to run its course unchecked."

Well, that is rather a serious consideration. That is a consideration to which I wish to direct the attention of this Committee, and which ought to create serious misgivings in our minds as to whether all these reductions by which this equilibrium, or apparent equilibrium, is to be obtained are wise and legitimate. Again, I understand that there has been a very considerable reduction in the outlay on roads and public buildings. But on these and other matters I do not wish to trespass too long on the time of the Committee. I wish next to say a few words on the encroachment on the Famine Fund. I will not argue the vexed question of the original purpose and object of the Famine Fund.

I will only say this—that by many eminent authorities the views of the right hon. Gentleman are not shared, and that the right hon. Gentleman has raised a question of very considerable controversy. But what I wish especially to point out is that these proceedings have been undertaken in order to reduce the deficit of the present year. But that is a desperate expedient, and it is impossible that such an expedient can be resorted to in future years. I think that we must feel ourselves entitled to ask for further information from the Government as to what they contemplate doing when these resources cannot be looked to? The Finance Minister of India himself has expressed the strongest views on this point. I ask the permission of the Committee to read a single paragraph from his statement for 1894-5, which has also been laid on the Table of this House. It deals with those very questions which have been put before us to-night, and it seems to me shows that the Finance Minister takes a somewhat different view from the right hon. Gentleman as to the expediency of resorting to this means of meeting a financial difficulty. He says—

> "The means which we have adopted in our Budget Estimates of nearly balancing our revenue and expenditure are means which will hardly be available a second time. It is at some risk that we suspend even for one year the provision of a crore or a crore and a-half, which we shall certainly require if a famine season comes on us. We cannot call our financial position safe till we find ourselves again with that crore to the good. The 40 lakhs also which we obtain from the Provincial Governments exhaust for the time the source to relief from temporary difficulties. A year hence we shall certainly have to reconsider our position."

Well, Sir, if that is so, we are entitled to make some inquiries of the Government as to what other expedients they are looking to in the future? We are entitled to make inquiries from the Government as to what will be done in the future. How are you going to meet the difficulties in which you will be placed in the future, and from which, as far as one can judge of the financial position, there can be no escape? The Member for Aberdeenshire (Mr. Buchanan) has placed a Notice on the Paper, from which it appears clear that he is in no difficulty on the subject. He says impose duties on cotton goods. He asks the House to pass a Resolution giving full power and authority to impose duties on cotton, and upon goods coming from Lancashire into India, at any time that the Government think it advisable to do so. Well, I am bound to make this admission, that having once made a departure from your principles, having once resorted to the expedient of the imposition of these kinds of duties, I see neither sense nor reason nor logic in exempting particular articles from these duties. I see the less excuse in this case, for the duties, if imposed already, would have saved you from any deficit at all, and would, indeed, have secured you a surplus. Neither do I see, in regard to another article, why—unless your object is to deal another blow at silver and still further increase the disparity between the two metals—I say I do not see why, if you should tax silver in your new Import Duties, you are to refrain from imposing a duty likewise upon gold. But apart from that question, and speaking for the moment only as far as the Cotton Duties are concerned, although I have expressed the opinion which I have just uttered, it is none the less deplorable to my mind that we should be driven by the financial policy you have adopted to consider expedients so injurious to our industries at home. It emphasises very strongly the straits to which hon. Gentlemen belonging to the Party opposite are driven in order to support their policy of closing the Mints—that they, who have always been Free Traders and have been the most ardent disciples of Mr. Cobden and the worshippers of his fetish, should now be the first to urge on the Government Protection, and Protection moreover of a character by which they would impose duties on the chief manufactures of their own country. I think it will also be well to bear in mind that this proposal is made at a time when probably the industries in the North of England have seldom or never been less prosperous than now. I rather hope that the workers—the producers and artizans of the North of England—will take note of this: that they will remember, when the time comes, that it was from a Member of the Party who, above all, profess to be their friends—though I am bound to say that I think that to a great extent their action has been limited to professions—that it was from a Member of this Party that the first attempts were made to aim a blow at them, and the industries by which they live. The injury is all the greater, because the workers and industries of Lancashire, as of India, are suffering at the present time from one common cause. There is no doubt of the injury which the fall in silver has inflicted on India. And as to Lancashire ask any manufacturer, and he will tell you that there is no doubt as to the injury it has inflicted on him. But how have they been met? Whenever this question has been raised in the House or out of it—so far as I am aware—by any Representative of the industries in the North of England or by anyone else in this House, it has been met by nothing but sneers, jibes, and taunts on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. But there remains the fact, however much he may sneer at it, that this question of the fall in silver is a question which lies at the very root of all our difficulties in India, and of the manufacturing depression in Lancashire. Lancashire, then, has a two-fold cause of complaint and apprehension. In the first place, the Government have contemptuously ignored the representations of Lancashire. In the second place, they would suffer greatly if the policy recommended by the Member for Aberdeenshire were attempted, for then the Government, in order to efface the consequences which have been brought upon them by their policy, would be striking a blow at the special industries of the premier manufacturing county in this country. I must say that the time for making this proposal on the part of the hon. Member has been well selected. I do not know whether he intends to press his Motion, or whether he will even have the opportunity of doing so, but he must know that this is a time when on so important a proposal there is no fair representation of the House of Commons. If I may presume to offer any advice whatever on this subject to the Committee or to any of my hon. Friends, I would say that I think that they would do well to reserve to themselves absolute freedom of action and opinion upon this most important point. What the Government may think it right to do on this question I do not know. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. H. H. Fowler) has carefully abstained from taking any line whatever upon it to-night. For my part, if I were called on to express my own opinion I should express my deep regret that Her Majesty's Government should have thought it fitting, and found it to be their duty, to adopt a financial policy in India which has seemed to any hon. Member to render necessary a step so injurious to some of the industries of their own country—a step, moreover, which, once taken, may have to be extended. For once the resource is adopted for the purpose of Revenue of imposing Import Duties in India you will naturally be driven to make them higher and higher, as your necessities increase, and in that way they may be fraught with consequences of the gravest character to English industries. However, that is a matter which it is for the Government to decide, and for which the full responsibility must rest on them, and them alone.

Sir J. KITSON (York, W.R., Colne Valley) desired to offer a few observations in reference to that part of the statement of the Secretary of State which concerned the construction and extension of railways in India. As he much regretted to observe, the rate of progress of endowed new railway lines in India which had been so slow in the past was not likely at present to be accelerated. Indeed, from the figures placed before the Committee it would appear that in the year 1894-5 the rate would be materially slackened. He ventured to ask the indulgence of the Committee, because he took up this question as manager of a large industrial undertaking giving employment to many workmen who would receive employment of a beneficial character if public works of this nature were pressed forward. He saw in India a reasonable opportunity of finding that employment of which they were sadly in want. In the course of a long experience extended, as regarded his own firm, to over half a century, he had seen the market in England for railway material existing, first in England alone, open out into France, Germany, and the Continent generally, but now, alas! this was absolutely closed to this country. But, happily, new markets were developed in South America, in our Colonies, and in India, and in these latter (India and the Colonies) at the present time there was the only hope for the extension of the iron, steel, and engineering trades of this country. The House had frequently been occupied, and particularly quite recently, in consideration of proposals having for their object restriction of the hours of labour, and the one reasonable argument put forward for their adoption was the plea that thereby work would be more evenly divided among those who lived by their labour. He did not doubt the sincere desire of those who sought by drastic methods to diminish the ranks of the unemployed, but it was not too much to ask the House to consider whether there could not be found, through public works of a useful and remunerative character, fields of employment at home and abroad in possessions such as our great Empire of India. We are responsible for the provision of efficient transport service in India, and when it was borne in mind that in that Empire we controlled the destinies of nearly one-fifth of the computed population of the globe, it must be admitted that the simple statement of the mileage of railways in India in contrast to the vast population gave an impression that it was wholly inadequate for the service of such a teeming population. There was a strong conviction that the obstacles which impeded its more rapid development were raised by the Government in India and not by the Home administration. The present Secretary of State, as was very well known by association and descent, as well as by knowledge of the position, was bound to be on the side of those who would more rapidly extend the railway system of India; but what did he propose in the statement he had just made as to the outlay on the construction of State railways in the coming financial year? For State railways in 1894-5, the estimated outlay was Rx.3,477,400. The expenditure for 1893-4 amounted to Rx.4,104,500, so that the proposed expenditure on State railways showed a reduction of Rx.630,100. True, there was an increase in the outlay by Guaranteed Companies to the amount of Rx.369,400, but there still remained an actual reduction of estimated expenditure in 1894-5 of Rx.260,700. The proposed outlay on construction was Rx.3,474,400, and that on the Guaranteed Companies' lines Rx.1,393,400, making a total of Rx.4,867,800, or, taking the rupee at fourteen pence, £2,839,550 sterling. The outlay upon new railway works and extensions in England, where the railway system was practically complete, was last year £25,000,000 sterling, and over the four previous years the average outlay for the extension and development of the existing system in England was £20,000,000 sterling, a total of £80,000,000 having been laid out in four years. Contrasted with the figures of the Indian proposals, at any rate, the latter could not be considered prodigal; and, indeed, he thought them parsimonious and far behind the necessities of the country. The total mileage of Indian railways open at the end of 1893 was 18,345 miles, the length sanctioned in that year 636 miles, and the total length sanctioned for 1894 was only 136 miles. The right hon Gentleman stated that the net receipts amounted to 5·44. The Committee had been told there had been a loss on the working of railways in India, but that loss was entirely owing to the rate of exchange, and so far was there from there being a loss on the working of the railways in India that he would not hesitate to provide a syndicate that would be prepared to give the Government of India not less than £200,000,000 or £250,000,000 sterling for the railways and take the loss on exchange. He invited the Committee to note the comparison of 18,455 miles of railway open in India with 174,784 miles in the United States. In India there was a length of 1 $\frac{1}{10}$ miles of railway for each 100 square miles of area; in the United States there were six miles for each 100 square miles. In the United States the percentage was six miles for each 1,000; and there was 10 times the mileage in the United States for area, and 45 times the provision for each 10,000 of population. In Russia, sparsely populated as it was, there was twice the provision in Russia in Europe, and in Russia in Asia 20 times the mileage to the population compared with India. He would remind the Committee that at this moment Russia was pressing forward its railway construction. Five thousand miles of railway were being constructed to connect Siberia with the Pacific coast. It was not necessary to demonstrate the paramount necessity of more railways for India, as it had been admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India. In his speech yesterday he said—

> "I do not know a better test of the improvement of a country than railways. Nothing has been more important than the improvement effected by the railway administration in India, and the construction of the railways has been a great source of prosperity to the country, and a most important cause of its increased wealth."

The right hon. Gentleman gave some statistics of the advance of wages in India, which in the last 10 or 15 years amounted to 16⅔ per cent. He might tell them that wherever railways were constructed the wages of artisans in contact with the railways invariably doubled, if not increasing to even a larger extent. Therefore, there was no dispute as to the necessity of railways. The question was, how was the money to be obtained? Competent authorities showed that 20,000 miles of railway were required. It was not necessary to indicate the districts or directions in which they should be made, because thousands of miles of railways had been surveyed and sanctioned by the Government of India which were not yet constructed. Lord Ripon, who was an authority upon this subject, sanctioned more miles of railway than any Governor General of late years, and he had often stated to him (Sir J. Kitson) in conversation how strongly he was impressed with the need for more railways in India. He gathered that the block was somewhere in India. He remembered a friend of his of high position in the Indian railway world telling him of a certain Indian railway scheme which had been before the Indian authorities for some years. When the noble Lord the Member for Paddington came into Office the matter was explained to him, and after careful consideration he sent a peremptory message to India which brought about a settlement in a few weeks. The scheme was at once prosecuted and was now in operation. That was the Indian Midland system. He had the greatest confidence in the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India; he thought, indeed, he might say that he had more confidence in him than in the noble Lord the Member for Paddington, and he believed that this matter was in very strong hands. The most economical method of providing capital was for the Government of India to borrow the money, because it could borrow at a low rate of interest; but it would appear from the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman that this was a method which was closed for the present. But there were other methods by which the hoards of treasure which they heard recounted yesterday as existing in India could be drawn upon if the native bankers and financial agents were approached in a businesslike manner. He knew of some tramway schemes, the capital for which had been provided by Indian bankers. If, then, the Government could not borrow largely, the bankers and financial agents would undertake the construction of railways provided that businesslike terms were offered to them. Of course, the Indian Government might propose such hard terms as to check and discourage enterprise. As a fact, he knew of many Indian projects which had been checked by attempts at driving hard bargains. The general interest of India ought not to be sacrificed to the timidity and the slothfulness of a Department. The times were very favourable for the undertaking and the prosecution of great public works and railway construction. Cheap money, cheap material, and unemployed labour were at the service of those who could offer fair terms, and the Secretary of State could render invaluable service both to England and to India by advancing these undertakings, which would provide profitable employment for thousands who were loudly calling for and urgently in need of it.

Sir W. HOULDSWORTH (Manchester, N.W.) said, the Committee would recognise that the statement which they had listened to that evening was one of exceptional interest, and exceedingly important, and he was sure they were very much indebted to the Secretary of State for India for the very clear and interesting manner in which he had put the facts before them. He thought that his statement differed in one respect from many of the previous statements made on the Indian Budget in that House, because it was apparent that it not only dealt with the finances of India, but with many important questions connected with the commerce and industries of both India and England. Under these circumstances, he greatly regretted that these important questions, in all their ramifications and details, had been relegated to the end of the Session, and he thought they had cause for complaint, for in the early weeks of the Session the Chancellor of the Exchequer promised a day on which Indian finances should be discussed. He did not say that that promise had been deliberately unfulfilled—it might have been that circumstances were too strong for the right hon. Gentleman — but in the position in which Indian finances and everything connected with Indian affairs were placed at present, it would have been most desirable that they should have had a day set apart entirely for the discussion of Indian questions, apart altogether from the ordinary discussion upon the Budget, because it was evident from the statement they had heard, taken in connection with various interesting Blue Books that they had had placed in their hands, embraced many important matters, and not only important, but absolutely new, departures in policy on the part of the Indian and Home Governments. They had the closing of the Mints, the imposition of Import Duties, the discussions in the Legislative Council, and the threatened Cotton Duty. He only proposed to deal with one or two of these questions; and, first, he would say a few words upon the closing of the Mints. They were told that this step was still in an experimental stage. He did not know how long that stage was to continue. Already it had existed for over 12 months, and, though the Government might say that they had not all the material to come to a final decision as to whether the experiment had been successful or not, there were several conclusions that might be arrived at even at present. He did not wish to appear hostile with regard to the closing of the Mints, but that policy had been universally condemned by all the authorities, not excluding even the Indian Government and the Herschell Committee, and he did not think the Government would have adopted it except as a policy of despair. There was evidence that there were other remedies for the position in which they were placed, and it was only failing these that they put this proposal to the Government. The same proposal was made in 1889, and the Government on that side of the House absolutely declined to allow the Indian Government to adopt it; and they did so because they believed it would be injurious and detrimental to the people of India. Therefore, the present Government were bound to show very strong reason for the closing of the Mints. One of the conclusions they could already draw from the experiment was that, if it succeeded in maintaining the rupee and in raising the value of the rupee as compared with the sovereign, the effect would be to injure very seriously indeed the export trade of India. They had this remarkable testimony from the Consul at Shanghai, who stated that in the quarter immediately following the closing of the Indian Mints the exports fell one-half from what they were in the corresponding quarter of the previous year. He did not think that that was denied by the Secretary for India. Then with regard to Manchester goods, the fall in silver which had resulted from the closing of the Indian Mints produced this effect—that the exports from Lancashire to China and the East were absolutely reduced in one year to one-half. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman and his advisers were perfectly prepared for a considerable dislocation of trade, but he could not agree that that would be temporary. It seemed to him that as long as there was a gap between the gold value of the rupee and the gold value of silver there must be that dislocation of trade and prevention of exports from India to the far East. Coming now to the question of Import Duties, he submitted that that was a most serious departure from the true principles of Free Trade, and from the principles upon which he thought commercial legislation ought to be based. He knew it was thought that Free Trade principles would be maintained if they took care not to impose duties of a protective character. He did not think that that was the full extent of Free Trade principles. The apostles of Free Trade held the wider view that there should be the freest possible exchange between the nations of the world without any interference by duties of any kind whatever. It appeared to him that the Import Duties which had already been placed upon goods going into India were protective. There were no countervailing Excise Duties It might be said that these articles on which there were duties were not produced in India; but that was not the fact with many of the articles, for woollen and silk goods and many other of the articles on which there were duties were manufactured to a greater or less extent in India. He would go further, and say that, even if they were not manufactured there now, how did they know that putting the 5 per cent. duty on these articles would not at once encourage and stimulate their manufacture in India and bring them into competition with our own industries? Indeed, such an event was extremely likely, and the tax upon tea in England was not at all analogous, for tea could not be grown in this country. Therefore, with regard to the proposed Cotton Duty, the Secretary for India could not trust entirely to the argument about countervailing duties, because he had already thrown that over with regard to a number of articles on which there was now a duty. The extension of industries in India during the last 10 or 15 years had been enormous, and he believed that the movement in these industries which completed with our own had been stimulated by the fall in silver. In 1882 the present Duke of Devonshire stated that

> "there was no country in the world where it was less desirable to raise a duty on cotton goods than in India."

He added that it was desirable, in the interests of India, that its foreign trade should be increased, and then declared that the policy and the action of the Government in India in taking off the duty on cotton was sound and wise, and that it had been adopted not in deference to any political pressure or exigency, but deliberately in the interests of the people of India. He would like to say a few words on the subject of the Cotton Duties, which were, it was true, only threatened. He thought he understood the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India to say he feared the necessity would arise in which they might have to be imposed. He was quite prepared to admit that, when they had embarked on this policy of Import Duties in order to fill up a gap which had been caused by the loss on exchange, he confessed it might turn out to be difficult to defend the exemption of cotton goods. He believed there were arguments which could be used, and which no doubt would be used as to this matter before the right hon. Gentleman let the blow fall. He would, however, suggest that in the first place this was a very large industry. It was, he thought, nearly one-half of the whole of the imports into India, and it was also a very large industry in one important part of this country. There was a second suggestion he would like to make, and that was that it existed at present on a very large scale in India itself, which differentiated it no doubt from those which he had referred to, although he thought it would be found that they were increasing. There was another point, and that was that already, even without the operation of any Import Duties, the trade of Lancashire, both with India and the far East, had been seriously injured during the last 20 years. He should like to give the figures of the exports of cotton yarn to the far East from 1881 to 1892, and to compare them with the growth of exports from India to the same places —China, Hong Kong, and Japan. He found that, while the exports of cotton yarn from England to those places had fallen off from £47,000,000 in 1881 to £31,000,000 in 1892, the exports from India to China, Hong Kong, and Japan, had increased from £25,000,000 in 1881 to £178,000,000 in 1892, showing that there had been a complete displacement of the export trade from England to the far East in favour of India. He could give other proof, but he did not think it was necessary, because he did not think it was denied that by the bonus which India had received by the fall in silver she had been enabled to take the place of Lancashire. Objection was taken to the word "bonus," and he confessed he did not like it himself; but undoubtedly it was a fact that the trade between India and the far East being on a silver basis, and not being touched, had increased to an enormous extent, while, owing to the difference in exchange between this country and the far East, and silver-using countries, our trade had been very much diminished. The right hon. Gentleman had indicated more than once that he would not think of imposing these Cotton Duties unless he could rob them of their protective character. He assumed that the right hon. Gentleman was trusting to the imposition of countervailing duties in India in order to avoid any suspicion of protection. It appeared to him that that was a very doubtful, if practical, policy. While it might result in protecting them in Lancashire from unfair competition from the

Indian manufacturer, they were going at one blow to do an injury both to Lancashire trade and to the manufacturing industries in India. It was, as the right hon. Gentleman had pointed out, the consumer who would pay this Import Duty, and, of course, if he had to pay the Import Duty he would, in all probability, consume less. That was the natural tendency, and the effect would be that, although they might keep the Indian manufacturer and the Lancashire manufacturer on a par, they would *pro tanto* destroy the trade of both, and thus commit a grievous injury. He would like to point out that these duties were abolished not because of their protective character, but because, as many authorities stated at the time, they believed they were unjust and detrimental to trade, both in regard to the people of India and of this country. Those who could look upon this matter in cold blood, as it were, at the time when the Resolutions of that House dealing with these duties were passed, and apart from many questions which surrounded them to-day, had no hesitation in saying that these Cotton Duties, and, he thought, all the Import Duties, were detrimental to the interests of the people of both countries, and they had, in fact, been condemned by all the great authorities both in India and in that House. He believed that no one was less desirous of putting on Import Duties of any kind than the present Secretary of State for India if he could possibly avoid it, and he perfectly trusted him when he said that he would not impose them unless the necessities were, in his opinion, so great as to force it to be done. The justification for the imposition of Import Duties was, as was bluntly stated by the Indian Finance Minister, "We want money; and money we must have, in some way or another." There was no question as to the cause of the deficit which India had to face. The deficit was entirely accounted for by the loss in exchange, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the proper way was not to deal with the evil directly, and not fill up a gap which occurred every year and increased every year with anything that the Government of India could lay its hands upon. He should be sorry to lead the Committee into a bi-metallic discussion, but he thought he was entitled to ask him to look into this question and see if there were not other methods by which this loss could be avoided, and at the same time these very objectionable means of raising revenue by Import Duties could also be avoided. He asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would not deal directly with this evil, and not merely fill up a gap that occurred every year and increased every year, by temporary arrangements. The establishment of a par between silver and gold by International Agreement amongst the nations had always been the remedy which the Indian Government from their experience and authority had presented to the Home Government, and he doubted very much whether there was a single member of the Indian Government or any official either at home or in India who was not prepared to support that, and say it was the true and right remedy, and they had no doubt whatever that it would be successful. He denied that the necessity for the imposition of these Cotton Duties had arisen. There was the remedy which had been pointed out over and over again by the Indian Government, and which could be applied, and it was only the determination of the Home Government which stood in the way of any International Agreement. Once they had got the value of gold and silver established on a permanent basis, they would be able to relieve themselves of their difficulties, and England and India would both benefit. He hoped the Government would, before the next Budget Statement, consider this question even more carefully than they had done in the past.

*Mr. **BUCHANAN** (Aberdeen, E.) said, that with regard to the Committee to be appointed next Session, there was one subject which he hoped would be included in the financial matters to be referred to it—namely, the apportionment of the expenditure between this country and India. It had been a source of constant complaint for many years past that India was unfairly treated where there was a joint financial responsibility with this country. India was saddled with half the expenses of the Opium Commission, and India was saddled with these expenses, without, as he understood, having any power to resist the expenditure. But there were other departments in which India had made complaints through her Ministers and those who had had charge of her Military Forces. The Member for Oxford stated that changes were made in our military system at home which entailed large expenditure in India, and while India was not consulted in regard to these changes, India had to pay her share of these expenses. In a Blue Book dealing with the question of Home Charges there was a Despatch of 1889, which set out a Table showing that during a period extending from 1864 to 1882, no less a sum than £880,000 per annum was added to the military expenditure in India by charges imposed upon her by changes in the military system at home, and in regard to which she was not consulted, and her interests were not considered. That he held to be alone a suitable subject for inquiry by a Committee of that House, and he hoped it would be included in the Reference to the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman said he was going to appoint next Session. He desired to say a few words upon one point which had been discussed—namely, the question of the exception of the Cotton Duties from the Tariff Bill which was recently passed by the Indian Government. In the very able and attractive statement laid before them this evening by the Secretary of State for India, the right hon. Gentleman dealt with this purely as an economical question. When he dealt with this matter he rather felt that the account which the right hon. Gentleman gave to this House of the history of the question was not quite the same as that set before them in the Blue Books in their hands. But passing that by, what he did not think the right hon. Gentleman laid sufficient stress upon was that it was not merely an economic question, but a question of great financial and political importance as well. He dealt with it purely as a financial question. He (Mr. Buchanan) did not feel that he was at all capable of arguing an economic question of this sort with his right hon. Friend, but to his mind a considerable part of the case had been stated by the hon. Baronet opposite. A Tariff Bill had been imposed by the Government of India, which had been sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government. It included a very great variety of articles. That Tariff Bill was proposed by the Government of India, and was sent home to this country for approval. It met with the unanimous support of the Government of India. It met with the unanimous support of the Council of India, and it was Lord Kimberley and the Cabinet of this country who said to the Government of India, "You may pass your Tariff Bill, and you may include in it anything you like except cotton." It was the exemption of this one article from the Tariff Bill, which was sanctioned by the Government of India, that he thought upon financial and political grounds they had good reason to complain of.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, no Bill proposed any duty upon cotton. Telegraphic communications passed before the Bill was introduced.

*Mr. BUCHANAN said, he was not aware of the actual procedure, but substantially the Government of India proposed, as he understood, an all-round Import Duty of 5 per cent., or that was what they wished, and the Government in this country said, in effect, "You may have an all-round duty of 5 per cent., so long as you do not include cotton in that all-round duty." As to the protective character of this duty, as the hon. Member for Manchester had pointed out, where an Import Duty was imposed on articles manufactured in that country, that duty was of necessity protective in its character, and so far as the duty fell upon imported articles such as were manufactured in India it was protective. Statements of Sir E. Baring and of Sir A. Lyall, one of the Members of the Council, had been quoted, and the necessities of India were said to be so great that the Government had to cast the net far and wide, including many items that were not in the Tariff of 1875. Anyhow, if the protective nature of it vitiated the proposal to put a duty upon cotton goods, so did it vitiate the proposal so far as it referred to any goods produced within the limits of India. Another argument adduced by the right hon. Gentleman was the Resolution of the House of 1879, and he was rather astonished at this when he remembered what took place yesterday. The Government which paid so little attention to a Resolution of 15 months ago were inclined to pay much more attention to a Resolution of a long past Parliament of 15 years ago. But he did not wish to make too much of that, and would not argue upon it. Surely the right hon. Gentleman would recognise the responsibility of the Government of to-day, and would not shelter himself under the Resolution of 1879? He did not believe the right hon. Gentleman would desire to do so; responsibility must rest on the Secretary of State and Her Majesty's Government. In a few words, he gave his version of the question as it appeared from the Blue Books from the financial and political point of view. Here was a case of a proposal unanimously made by the Government of India, sanctioned by the Secretary of State in Council, disallowed by Her Majesty's Government. That in itself was a very serious political fact. These apparent conflicts, for perhaps they were more apparent than real, between the Secretary of State and the Government in India, were often very much exaggerated, and he had no wish to assist in the exaggeration, but here was a difference of opinion, and strong action by the Secretary of State overruling the opinion of the Government on a distinctly Indian matter. What was the financial position in which the Government of India found itself? Roughly speaking, as he gathered from the Blue Book and the right hon. Gentleman's statement, there was a deficit of about Rx.3,500,000, and how was this to be met? In the first place, by a suspension of the Famine Grant, the deficit was reduced by Rx.1,000,000. So far as he understood the matter, he entirely agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the Famine Grant was to be provided out of the surplus revenue, and if there was no surplus there could be no such special grant. To meet the Rx.2,500,000 remaining the Government of India said there must be new taxation and that the only source of such taxation was an Import Duty. They wanted to impose a 5 per cent. duty all round, and that would have met their requirements, about half the required amount being realised from cotton goods and the remainder from other items. In that way, with an equal Import Duty all round, the deficit would have been met. But according to the Blue Book the deficit had not been met—there was still a deficit of Rx.310,000, and as the right hon. Gentleman said, all depended upon taking the rupee at 14d., and it had fallen 1d. [*Cries of* "No!"] At all events, the proposals in the Budget had in view a deficit, not a surplus; while with the Import Duty there would have been a surplus, or at any rate the financial exigencies of the present year would be met. What was substituted for the proposed Cotton Duty? The right hon. Gentleman glided gently over this matter. Economies were to be rigidly enforced; there was a saving of Rx.370,000 odd in buildings and roads—Rx.194,000 on the military side, and Rx.176,000 on the civil side. A Member of the Council said—

> "We have practically cut out every work from the civil side of the expenditure to which we were not absolutely committed."

The result, as had been said by a distinguished Member of the Council, would be the arrest of all development. Then, as to military expenditure another Member, Sir Griffith Evans, was reported to have said in Council—

> "The barracks in Upper Burma are not to be built, the sanitary measures required for the Army in India will not be carried out, and, worst of all, the proposals for the improvement of the water supply for the troops must stand over. This means preventible sickness and death among the troops, and the dreadful scourge of enteric fever will run its course unchecked."

This was the statement of a non-official Member of the Council, and in language almost as strong the military Member of the Council said the result meant practically the undertaking of no new works, the neglect of repairs to roads and buildings, and the almost complete stoppage of all sanitary improvements. A serious statement for the responsible military Member of the Council to make, and this gave the Committee some idea of the cost to be paid for the exemption of cotton goods from this new tariff. Besides enforcing economies in this way, the Government of India had been obliged, owing to the exemption imposed upon them, to call on Local Governments for contributions to the amount of Rx.410,000, though, as the right hon. Gentleman said, they would still have a balance to their credit. But Mr. Westland's language showed that he took a very serious view of what he was obliged to do; he was most unwilling, he said, to have recourse to this method, which would mean, for a time, the stoppage of all administrative improvements, and take the heart out of local administrators. The Government were unable to adopt and carry through the only satisfactory means for relieving them from their financial pressure, and to the course pursued there were political objections. It did not tend to the stability or strength of the Government of India when there could be read in the Blue Books statements such as were made in the discussions in Council. One after another, distinguished Members of the Council declared opinions entirely opposed to the proposal for which they were obliged to vote, and Mr. Weston himself said that, so far as the merits of the question were concerned, he was disposed to agree with the opponents of the Bill, and not with those who supported it. This was hardly a fair position, if it could be avoided, in which to put Members of the Government of India. There was strong evidence displayed in the Blue Book, as well as in newspaper accounts of the discussions, as to the feeling in India on the subject. Statements were made by both official and non-official Members of the Council of India of the most serious character; that never in their experience had their been such an unanimous feeling of dissatisfaction as to the course pursued by the Supreme Government as there had been on this subject. Of course one would naturally discount the strength of irresponsible statements made under such circumstances, but, making all allowances, there was disclosed considerable, and he was disposed to think justifiable, dissatisfaction at the conduct pursued by Her Majesty's Government. So much as regarded the past. One point upon which his hon. Friend had dwelt was that upon which he would say a word. Of course, all would regret and deplore the necessity which compelled the Government of India to impose Import Duties at all. It was a necessity of the financial position, and it could only be hoped that improvement in the financial position would enable a remission to be made. But the more the regret the greater the difficulty of defending the exemption of cotton goods. The Secretary of State said the matter must remain over for another year; that the decision of the Government was final for the present year.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, that was not quite what he said.

*Mr. BUCHANAN said, no, that was his account of it. He did not attribute the words to his right hon. Friend, but he assumed that in substance his right hon. Friend had said what, of course, had been said in another place on this subject: that if it should be found necessary to include cotton goods, then there must be provision made for countervailing Excise. He dwelt upon that, and he would not discuss the matter in opposition to his right hon. Friend; but he would like to point out that, from statements made in regard to the rivalry between Lancashire and India in cotton manufactures, it would appear that only in a limited field did such rivalry exist. The statement had been made and not denied that it was only over 6 per cent. of cotton goods that there was competition between India and Lancashire.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: I do not admit it.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, it had been stated and not with authority denied.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: It is in dispute.

*Mr. BUCHANAN would not pin himself to a figure, but at all events it was but a small proportion of the manufacture as to which the two commodities came into rivalry. The statement of Mr. Weston was that, while Lancashire occupied a wide area without competition, it was only in a very limited field that the Indian mills competed with Lancashire trade. Whatever the extent of the overlapping might be, if there was to be an imposition of a countervailing Excise it should only apply to those goods in which there was this direct competition. With great satisfaction the Committee must have heard the speech of the hon. Member for Manchester on the subject. No doubt there was a widely prevailing idea—and he was bound to say not without considerable justification—that it was due to pressure from Lancashire that the duty had not been allowed to be imposed. For that unfortunate impression Manchester merchants were to blame, for undoubtedly there had been some exceedingly strong statements made by those gentlemen. He had a selection from which he would not quote, but certainly representations in very strong language indeed were made to Lord Kimberley. But the hon. Baronet had discussed the matter in a rational spirit, and at the Manchester Chamber of Commerce on Monday it was discussed in a moderate and temperate manner. One gentleman said—

> "It is of the first importance to convince the people of India that whatever happens we desire to act towards them in the strictest justice, and not from the point of view of our own interest. We must regard this matter from a higher point of view than that of our local trade."

This was sounding the proper note on the subject, but if an idea in the other direction obtained among the people of India he did not think the people of India were to blame for it, because there had been justification. But allowing all that to pass, and looking to the discussion in the future—for he had little doubt that it must come up for discussion again—he hoped it would continue to be discussed in a fair spirit, and that in the endeavour to arrive at a settlement all would show not only a desire to do justice to our own people, but would act up to the ideal that in all these discussions the governing consideration of each and all should be the welfare of the whole people of India.

MR. HOLLAND (Salford, N.) thanked the hon. Member for Manchester for disabusing the minds of Members of the Committee of the idea generally prevailing, and often given expression to, that it was in some sort of dread of the effect on the votes of Lancashire that induced Lord Kimberley to exempt cotton goods from Indian Import Duties. Those gentlemen who took that view, basing it on what took place at the reception of the deputation by Lord Kimberley, must first ignore the sequence of events and deny the almanac, because, as a matter of fact, the decision of Lord Kimberley to exempt those goods was taken long before the deputation so often referred to waited upon him. The hon. Member who had just spoken said the competition between Lancashire and Indian products extended over a very limited area, and was confined to a very few towns. Knowing something of the trade, he was prepared to admit that the competition was now limited to a narrow range, but how long would it remain so limited were this 5 per cent. Import Duty imposed? At once there would be encouragement to extend that area, and concerns now limited to the production of the more common goods would, under the influence of the 5 per cent. protection, rapidly enlarge their range of operation, and before long there would be serious competition with Lancashire in a new and wider field. From the Blue Book he could quote Reports showing how without a protective duty this competition was increasing, as, for example, there was no doubt that, looking at the course of trade over a series of years, the competition of the Indian mills in Manchester goods was growing, the mills gradually beginning to make the medium class of goods which formed the bulk of the imports, and they were also beginning to bleach and dye their goods. This without any Import Duty, so that there was every probability that the competition would be extended over a much wider area if this duty were to be imposed. Many Members seemed anxious to know why this exceptional treatment had been granted to cotton goods. There was a history attaching to this question. Such duties were once in existence, and it was only after a long and stubborn fight that, 12 years ago, they were swept away. History had proved that the action Manchester took on that occasion was no selfish action, and that its interest was in no sense hostile to that of India, and the result showed that the line Lancashire took conduced to the benefit of India. He could appeal with confidence to Members of the House and ask, who was it gained most by the removal of the duties in 1882? and he was sure the reply would be not England—though, of course, England had gained—but India was the chief gainer. There was an idea abroad in India that she had been wronged in some way in the matter by the exemption of cotton from duty, an unfortunate idea, which ought to be dispelled at any cost. He knew Lancashire intimately, and might almost say that if a plan could be devised which at once would have the advantage of yielding the required funds for the Indian Exchequer, and at the same time put the manufacturers of India on the same footing as the manufacturers of England, Lancashire would not have a word to say in opposition to a proposition of that kind. Another consideration entitled the cotton trade to some exceptional treatment, its enormous extent forming, as it did, 50 per cent. of the imports into India. This was an extensive field in which production would be fostered and engendered by this duty, and if the effect of the duty should be to stimulate manufacturers in India to erect new mills, the removal of the duty would not remove the injury to Lancashire, for the mills would remain and the protected competition of India with Lancashire trade would continue. The hon. Member for Manchester had dwelt on the difficulties that in his view existed to the imposition of countervailing Excise Duties. The opinion of the Bombay spinners had been quoted, and they to a man—there being one exception—were opposed to these Excise Duties. So it was found that the Lancashire spinners were opposed to these Excise Duties. He could quote an opinion that would have great weight with the hon. Baronet. Sir John Stringer in 1881–2 declared that no protective duty should exist unless a countervailing Excise Duty was imposed along with them. For his part, he commended the action of the Government, and believed that in taking the course they had the Government had said to India that all the evils of protection would result by these duties; that the interests of the Empire would be sacrificed, and at the same time some injustice would be done to Lancashire. It was their duty as statesmen to look all round the question and take account of all parts of the Empire. They admitted that the welfare and interests of India had claims for first attention, and it was important the idea should not get abroad that India was regarded, to use an Americanism, as a mere dumping ground for English goods. The welfare of India was the first consideration with those who ruled that Empire, but he was altogether unwilling to believe that our statesmen were so bankrupt of resources that they were unable to suggest a plan of raising the revenue for the assistance of the Indian Exchequer without at the same time inflicting an injury upon a large industry in this country. He believed in this matter the views of Lancashire were not impracticable views. They admitted readily that the Indian Government was placed in a position of great difficulty, and were anxious to do what they could to assist the Government. If more money must imperatively be raised, he knew there were many men in Lancashire who would be content to have Import Duties imposed provided there were these countervailing Excise Duties levied at the same time. He knew the position of the cotton trade was in a somewhat hard case at the present time, but that was not the ground and basis of their appeal; and in asking for the consideration of the Government he felt sure they need not plead the necessity of their cause, but the justice of their case.

*SIR G. CHESNEY (Oxford) said, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for India naturally opened out a very large field of subjects which those who knew anything of India took an interest in. Many of these subjects had been dealt with by hon. Gentlemen around him; therefore, in the extremely brief observations he should make, he would address himself simply to one of the many points contained in the right hon. Gentleman's Statement which had not yet been referred to—namely, the railway policy. The loss that appeared upon the railway accounts, he thought, was due mainly to the way in which the accounts were presented; he said this without meaning to reflect upon the admirable way in which the Indian accounts generally were prepared; but he meant that in bringing the railway accounts into the finance accounts in the way in which it was now done by the Indian Authorities they were attempting an impossible task of combining the railway system with the general accounts of the revenue and expenditure of the year, including the class of transactions involved in a great commercial concern. Bringing the gross railway charges into the accounts was very misleading. The right hon. Gentleman had said the accounts now presented showed about Rx.92,000,00 on each side of the account, and from that the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to deduct various very large receipts in order to arrive at the net revenue and expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman might have added that of these disfiguring elements the railway transactions were the largest of all, and these to a large extent were misleading, because, as the Committee were aware, the Government were the largest owners of railways, the next largest owners being Guaranteed Companies. In dealing with the second class, the guaranteed railways, all that was brought into the account was the actual net receipts. On the other hand, in the case of the Government railways, the whole gross receipts were brought in, and, on the other side, was shown the traffic receipts and working expenses. Considering that hardly a year passed that the Government did not sell or buy a railway or that a railway did not change hands, it was evident that this way of showing the accounts was calculated to produce great confusion and make it extremely difficult to ascertain the real position of the Government, and he therefore would suggest that an effort should be made to separate their railway transactions from the ordinary Budget accounts, and to deal with the former as what they really are—commercial accounts. With respect to the general result, as the accounts stood now they showed a loss; but he believed this loss was more apparent than real, because the Government was not only paying interest upon the guaranteed loan, but they were taking the very prudent step of buying up these guaranteed lines altogether by means of annuities. A very large part of the expenditure, therefore, was expenditure of a temporary character, and in respect of which, in a few years, the Government would come into possession of a magnificent property. Therefore, although the Government now had a deficit, a considerable part of the expenditure would not occur again. That was one point he wished to call attention to. In the next place, the Government, had thrown into hotch-potch all the railways; but it was well-known that a considerable part of the railway system consisted of military lines on the frontier, which were made for military purposes solely, and which never could, and never would, bring in any appreciable revenue. He did not mean to say they were not economical works. On the contrary; if the Army was called into operation beyond the frontier, the completion of these railways would prevent the expenditure of millions of pounds which had to be incurred in the last war beyond the frontier. But it was surely a mistake to mix up all this purely military work with what were really the commercial undertakings—the other Indian railways. If they were kept separate it would reduce the cost of the railways by a very large figure. It was important to bear in mind that in the further extension of the railway system was to be found the one source of relief from the present financial embarrassment. The earlier railways, indeed, were loaded with the cost—the extravagant cost—of construction, which had occurred in the first instance due to want of experience and to mismanagement. Railway construction formerly cost very much more than it does now. In the next place, these earlier railways were loaded with a high rate of guarantee that would never occur again. The Government guaranteed 5 per cent. on the line in gold, and, in order to pay that, the line must make a return of 10 per cent. in silver, which was a very heavy loading indeed. They had to remember that in future, if they guaranteed at all, it would not be necessary to give a higher rate than 3 per cent., and in the next place that it was extremely improbable that silver would take another and a further fall of 50 per cent., and, therefore, even if they gave guarantees in gold, they would not again be loading the account with a heavy loss, because he thought it was reasonable to suppose the loss by exchange had reached its lowest and worst stage. With regard to railway enterprise, he was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman express so strong an opinion upon the useful effect of railways, as he (Sir G. Chesney) believed that nothing would do so much good for India as railways. The right hon. Gentleman had only been a short time in the position he now held; but he was bound to say that so far the action of the India Office, and the steps that had been taken lately, had not been of that happy character to encourage the employment of English capital in Indian railways. There had been a reaction against the guarantee system, but from guarantees the Government had now gone into the other extreme of apparently offering no inducement to English capitalists to put their money into Indian railways. The railways in India would be subject to a degree of control which railways in this country were not; and, on the other hand, they were not to receive that definite assistance which he thought was absolutely necessary to secure the confidence of the English investor, and lead to that rapid extension of railways that was so desirable in the interests of India. Quite recently there was a project for a valuable railway in the North-West Province, a railway that would be valuable both to the interests of India and of this country, but the correspondence respecting it had taken longer than the time that would have been necessary to complete the line, and in the end the proposal was so weighted with conditions, qualifications, and complications of all sorts that it was absolutely impossible for any projector to put it before the investing public. He would defy anyone not an expert in railway matters to know what was the real proposal of the Government in regard to it, yet the line was most urgently required in the interests of the country.

*Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, that though there was again presented to them a deficit in the Indian Revenue, there was one bright side to the Budget. They were told yesterday that India was overwhelmingly an agricultural country, that the great bulk of the people of India obtained their living by the occupation of tilling the land. It was a gratifying fact to note that whilst all over the rest of the world at the present time a bitter cry was going up of agricultural distress, that was not the case with regard to India, the agriculture of that country, from all the Reports they had received, being in a flourishing condition. It was a green oasis in the general waste. The explanation was exceedingly simple. India had been spared that terrible and continued fall in prices which had been the principal cause of agricultural distress in England, the Colonies, and the United States. The fortunate cultivators of the soil in India had enjoyed the inestimable blessing of a stable standard. Their obligations remained to-day substantially the same as they were 20 years ago. They could meet them with the same amount of produce. It was all very well to talk of the fall of the rupee and the depreciation of silver; but anyone who would carefully look into the actual facts must, he was sure, be convinced that silver had really not fallen in value at all in these last 20 years. The purchasing power of an ounce of silver was now as great as it was 20 years ago. He supposed there was no more sound and reliable statistician than Dr. Giffen, and in an admirable essay he wrote in 1888 he showed that, so far from silver having fallen during recent years, it had a little appreciated. The farmer in India to-day received the same amount of silver money for his produce that he received before. Therefore, while in this country and the colonies farmers were groaning under distress, the happy cultivators of the soil in India were going on their way in fair prosperity. According to Mr. Westland's figures, dealing with a period of 16 years, in all those years the Revenue of India had increased, and yet they had this singular fact: that with a constantly and steadily increasing Revenue India was constantly in financial difficulties. The explanation of this was to be found in the one word "exchange." He need not dwell upon that matter now, because the right hon. Gentleman below him had expatiated upon it, and admitted it to the full in his speech; and the speeches of the Viceroy and of his Council in India as given in the Blue Book were full of it, too. Exchange, and exchange alone, they said, was the cause, the only cause, of their continual deficiency. The fact in regard to India was that it was a mortgaged farm, and mortgaged unhappily in gold. And as gold was steadily mounting in value, India, like all other similarly mortgaged persons or countries, found the real weight of its debt continually increasing. She had to buy gold with produce, and, as the value of the metal increased, had to give more and more produce in order to obtain the same quantity of it. The growing exports of India were not so much an indication of her prosperity as of the growing weight of her indebtedness. Until the Home Government opened its eyes to the great central fact that it was not silver which had fallen in value, but gold, which had risen, they would never successfully grapple with the Indian financial difficulty. That was the key to the position. The fact that gold had risen in value was clear and obvious, testified by evidence of every kind. If they took any group of commodities at their wholesale prices, and measured gold by that standard, they would find that 63 sovereigns would purchase as much as 100 sovereigns would 20 years ago; gold as measured by commodities had risen 50 per cent.; but silver, tested in the same way, showed no change of purchasing power, showing that the movement had been, not in the silver, but in the gold. They were deceived by old prejudices and superficial appearances, just as in former times the theologians were who held that the earth stood still, and that the phenomena of day and night was caused by the movement of the sun. An accurate observation of the facts showed conclusively that it was gold which was going up—not silver, which was going down—and this explained why India had to keep sending more and more of its commodities to meet its indebtedness. The steward of the rich man in the parable told his lord's debtor, who owed 100 measures of wheat, to take his bill and write fourscore. They had told India to take her bill and write 150. They had been more unjust than the unjust steward. The Home Government had refused to recognise the real cause of this exchange difficulty, and had wrapped itself up in its blind gold prejudices. It reminded him of the old Methodist hymn in which the unregenerate sinner is pictured—

> " Wrapped up in self-conceit and pride,
> 'I shall have peace at last,' he cried."

But the Government, like the sinner, have not found peace, nor would they while they founded themselves on the false belief that gold continued stable and that it was the silver that changed. The Government, instead of finding peace, had been driven into trying to do something. And what had they done? They had tampered with the standard of India in the interest of creditors and against the interest of the toiling masses. By purely artificial means they had laid heavier burdens upon those who had to buy their money with their produce and their labour. They had based prices and obligations fixed in money in India not upon the natural product of the precious metal, but upon the arbitrary will of the Government, and they had taken in hand the responsible and odious task of limiting the supply of the money of the people. Mr. Westland, in his Budget Statement, said that the central fact of the financial history of the country in the last year was the closing of the Mints; and, without intending to speak in any disrespectful terms, he (Mr. Everett) should like, in plain language, to call attention to what had been done by the closing of the Mints. First, look at the folly of it; or, if that were too strong, the lack of wisdom of it! Here was a prosperous country with an increasing Revenue, but the Government wanted more Revenue. What did they do? They actually cut off the supply of money out of which their Revenue came. Was there ever such a policy? Folly was written in large letters across the very face of such a plan. The result was, that they created a scarcity; they made a famine of money where before they had plenty, and for freedom, with all its blessings, they substituted restriction. Look at the cruelty of it, too, to the producers in that country, who had to pay their debts and taxes with their produce! By artificially raising the value of money the Government increased the difficulty to these poor people of getting it, and thus rendered their position harder and worse than it was before. If the right hon. Gentleman would read the fifth chapter of the Book of Exodus he would find a picture of what he and the Government were doing. They had taken Pharaoh as their model. There had been in the past history of this and other countries profligate Kings who had sought to enrich themselves at the expense of their subjects by debasing the coin of the realm at their Mints and pocketing the profit of such debasement. And now, in the 19th century, in this enlightened country they had—he was going to say a profligate Government; but he would rather say a Government which had broken loose from all sound reason and honesty—who were trying to enrich themselves at the expense of their subjects, not by debasing the coin of the realm, but by artificially raising its value. And he believed, as between the two, in an agricultural nation, they harmed the country more by artificially limiting and raising the value of the coin than the Kings did by debasing it and putting the profit of such debasement in their pockets. The Kings robbed creditors, but lightened the taxes. You rob the toiling millions—the producers—by lowering the money value of their produce, and you raise the burden of the taxes. You are worse really than the profligate Kings. Look at the confusion, too, that has been created by the closing of the Mints. Twenty years ago there was only one "money" in India, and the world. Silver and gold were one. Foreign Governments, by tampering with the currency in 1873, created two "moneys." This had led to all manner of difficulties, and now by the extraordinary action which you have taken there are three "moneys" instead of two. This was not all; for in the Blue Books which had been issued respecting India, there was the possibility indicated of a fourth money—namely, the native rupees coined in the native States —which the Blue Book stated were more easy to imitate than the others, so that in the artificial difference they had created between silver and the rupee the Government had introduced a great temptation to forge these native coins. And it was stated in the Blue Book that there were beginning to be detected signs of difference in value in circulation as between the native and the English rupees. Instead, therefore, of going back to one money, the Government had actually multiplied fourfold the evils and confusion of the money world. Worse than that, what had been done, so far as he could see, was perfectly useless. The Government would fail in the object they sought to attain, and, having mistaken the disease, their attempted remedy would only make things worse. It was like giving brandy to a patient in a raging fever. They had closed one of the great markets of the world against silver, and opened up a new source of demand for gold. What other effect could that have than to widen still further the great gulf between the two, and so to open still wider what the Council in India described as "the yawning gulf of their gold obligations"? It must be borne in mind to understand the position that the movement had been in gold and not in silver; and in creating this new demand for gold—the metal which was already moving up fast—they had pushed its value up higher still. This was shown by the further fall in silver as measured by gold. It had fallen 25 per cent. further since the Mints were closed, or, to speak more accurately, gold had risen by that much more, and prices of produce here had fallen in proportion. And he felt sure from what they had seen already, and from the natural consequences of raising the demand for an already appreciating metal, that the effect of trying to put India on a gold standard must be to aggravate still further every feature of the disease under which they already suffered. The course the Government were pursuing would make debt more onerous than ever, would lower prices, and would place the agriculturists in India in the same difficulties as those under which the agriculturists in England and other gold standard countries were labouring; it would complete, too, the ruin of the latter. There was once painted a series of pictures entitled "The Rake's Progress," which attained considerable fame in this country. The course taken by the Government since they had dealt with this question seemed to him very comparable to the different stages in the rake's downward progress. First of all, they were blind to the actual facts, and refused to believe that it was gold which had gone wrong, contending falsely that it was the silver. Then they tampered with the silver standard; that was the second stage. The third was running into debt; they had to come to Parliament to borrow more money. The fourth was misappropriation of other's money—they were driven to the misappropriation of the Famine and Provincial Funds. The fifth stage was that a stop was put to all further improvement in the country, the money intended for this purpose having been taken. The sixth and last stage, thus far, was that Free Trade had been abandoned, and the disciples of Cobden, the members of the great Liberal Party, had to give their consent to the imposition of duties in India. The last, the gallows, scene would come in due course. They were going contrary to everything that they had previously taught. They had talked against tampering with the currency, and they had tampered with it; against misappropriation, and they had been guilty of it; against putting on duties at the ports, and yet they had now done it. The closing of the Mints had been followed by the closing of the ports. They had tried artificially to raise the value of money in the country, and now they were going artificially to try and raise the value of the goods that went into the country, and they were driven by their necessities to tax the common necessaries of the people — even the light they burned at night and the agricultural implements that went into the country. Oh, the humiliation and the shame of it! When people read that—the English Government, and especially a Liberal Government, had been reduced to do this—it would produce that kind of shame in the beholders which the Babylonian people must have felt when they saw their great King, Nebuchadnezzar, reduced to going on all-fours and eating grass like an ox. This figure was used by a member of the Indian Council in his speech. Humiliation had been inflicted upon the Government of this country by the course they had pursued, and even now they were not at the bottom of the valley, for the Blue Book stated that there was no confidence felt that they were out of the difficulty. Even during the last two days, whilst this discussion had been proceeding, there were signs that the rupee was going to fall still further, or, in other words, that gold was still increasing in value. He recognised the great ability, sterling honesty, and integrity of character of the right hon. Gentleman who now presided over the India Office, and he would make an appeal to him. At school sometimes, a boy said what was a lie, and being challenged two courses became open to him —either to confess, or to lie it out. It appeared to him, looking at the course the Government had taken in this matter, they had not, indeed, told a lie, but that they had planted themselves upon absolutely false ground. They might be said to have had a lie in their right hand, and every step they had had to take in consequence had only plunged them deeper into the morass. Would the right hon. Gentleman bring his great powers of mind to bear on the question? If he would look into the facts and figures, he would see that the movement had been in gold and not in silver, and that consequently what was wanted was to lessen the demand for gold, not to increase it. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman was familiar with that interesting book, *The Pilgrim's Progress.* On a certain occasion the pilgrims, through wandering into Bye Path Meadow, got into Giant Despair's dungeon and suffered a great deal there, until a light broke in upon the mind of one of them, who said he had in his bosom a key that would open any doors in that loathsome dungeon. It was the key of Promise, which he took out, and which opened the locks that had kept them confined. Such a key was within the reach of his right hon. Friend. If the Government would realise how the facts really lay, would retrace their steps and enter into negotiations with other nations who, he was quite sure, would meet them half way, and so restore the old free use of both the precious metals by International agreement, they would soon find themselves out of the Giant Despair's dungeon of ever-falling exchange, and in the green meadows on their way to some happier and better place. He was convinced the movement had been in gold, not in silver, and there would be no remedy for Indian finance or for depressed agriculture at home unless something was done to lessen the continual appreciation of gold and to bring back again the old, free, and equal use of the two precious metals.

Sir A. SCOBLE (Hackney, Central) said, he should like to add a few words to what he said yesterday about Import Duties. He listened with great attention to what was said by the Secretary of State on the subject, and he must say that it appeared to him that the right hon. Gentleman did not make out a good case in defence of the course which the Government had pursued. The Government claimed to be consistent in their policy, but they might be said to have thrown over Free Trade and adopted Protection in regard to every other article excepting cotton goods and the precious metals, and therefore he did not see how the defence which the right hon. Gentleman had put forward could be maintained. The right hon. Gentleman said that these duties would fall on the consumer. This was, no doubt, the case, and the right hon. Gentleman proposed to get over the difficulty by putting a countervailing Excise Duty on the same class of goods when produced in the country. It did not matter what the proportions might be, but the Committee must know that the finer class of goods worn by the people of India were imported from England, and the coarser kinds were made in India itself. Therefore, instead of establishing a tax which would only fall on the wealthier classes, what the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do was to establish a law which would fall on the poorer classes. That being so, he did not see where the benefit to the consumer came in under the arrangement. The right hon. Gentleman should bear in mind that the area of taxation in India was comparatively small, and that its limit had practically been already reached. The right hon. Gentleman spoke with a certain degree of hopefulness of establishing in India something of the nature of the Death Duties, which had recently been instituted in this country.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: Oh, no.

Sir A. SCOBLE: Well, at all events, he said that there was nothing corresponding to Death Duties at present in India, and he (Sir A. Scoble) from that, perhaps wrongly, inferred that it was in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman, as a field of taxation which had not yet been entered upon. He regretted to say that it had been entered upon. A duty was levied on all grants of probate or letters of administration, which, however, were only required to be taken out by those subject to English laws. With regard to the vast mass of the population who were under Hindu or Mahomedan law, if they wanted the assistance of the Courts to recover debts due from persons deceased, they had to get a certificate for the collection of those debts upon which in like manner the Probate Duty was levied. As to the Salt Tax, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman when he said that he did not think that any statesman would endeavour to increase this tax. He, indeed, agreed with the right hon. Gentleman in the hope that before long this tax would be considerably diminished. It was very desirable that, as this was a time of peace, it should be diminished. In point of fact, the Salt Tax was the one tax which could be relied upon in the event of any great war in which India was involved. It should be a resource in case of emergency, but, unfortunately, at the present time it was as high as it was possible to make it. But, without dwelling any further on this part of the proposals of the Government, he should like to express the extreme satisfaction with which he heard the right hon. Gentleman speak of the necessity and the advantage of railway extension in India. There was a great tract of the country which was not at present occupied by railways, and it might be difficult to obtain English capital for the construction of railways in those parts if they had not the guarantee of the Government. He should advise the Government to extend the system of guarantees, and he also believed that the Government might well and profitably employ the very large cash balances they now had in making some of these railways in districts which were entirely without such accommodation, and where it was necessary that railways should be made in order to complete the chain of communication throughout the country. One other observation he should like to make in respect to what fell from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean (Sir C. Dilke) in regard to the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman promised yesterday. It seemed to him that an inquiry into the expenditure of India really came to this: that it was an inquiry into the whole administration. Such an inquiry would be a great deal too wide if that would not terminate in any reasonable time. It must necessarily be spread over one or two Parliaments, and by the time that its labours were terminated the subject would be stale and the labours of the Committee almost thrown away. He believed, however, that a limited inquiry would be of service, especially a limited inquiry into the financial relations between India and England. An inquiry so limited would, he thought, tend to get rid of some injustices with which India was at present afflicted, and would clear up many misapprehensions which prevailed largely in the minds of the educated natives of India. Such an inquiry might not only be useful, but be completed in a reasonable time. There were other matters which he would like to speak about; but he would not take up time, as older Members wished to speak. He must, however, express his sense of admiration of the clear exposition of the finances of India which the right hon. Gentleman had given, and still more of the determination which the right hon. Gentleman had shown to grapple with some of the more immediate difficulties which were threatening the Government of India at the present time.

*SIR W. WEDDERBURN (Banffshire) said, that he desired to thank his right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for having granted a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry. It was not all that had been asked for, but it was a step in the right direction, and considering his high reputation as a financier it seemed appropriate that the first step should be a financial one. He trusted that the Committee would be made so strong, both in numbers and in the selection of members, and that the Reference would be so comprehensive, that real benefit would accrue to India. He feared, however, that the tone of the speech just delivered by the Secretary of State would cause profound disappointment in India. It appeared to him that his right hon. Friend had abandoned the judicial attitude which the Secretary of State should maintain, and had constituted himself the spokesman and apologist of the official views of which they complained. They all knew that there were two sides to these questions. There was the view taken by the people of India, and there was the official Anglo-Indian view. The case for the officials was put before the Secretary of State by the India Office, and by the London Press, and by official Representatives on the other side of the House. But what chance had the people of India of getting a hearing? Responsible public associations in India had forcibly stated their case, which was diametrically opposed to the official case. And he had made a detailed representation to the Secretary of State on the subject. He was glad to say that that representation had received no small support from Members of that House. But in his speech the right hon. Gentleman had not deigned even to notice that representation or the facts, figures, and arguments which it contained. Listening to the speech, no one would have guessed that the Secretary of State had before him any case at all for the people of India. The right hon. Gentleman's speeches were pure official optimism. He merely stated the official case, and blessed it altogether. His right hon. Friend had complained that he had called him the tool of the Indian Council. He did not think he had used that word. But he desired to explain, that he did not regard his right hon. Friend as a willing tool, but as an unconscious victim of his surroundings in the India Office, a sufferer from the bad political atmosphere in which his work was carried on. They often read how a stout working man, being lowered into an old disused well, was overcome by the fumes of carbonic acid gas. And the same sort of thing happened to every Liberal Secretary of State whom they sent to the India Office. His right hon. Friend was quite unconscious of this, but this unconsciousness was the most dangerous part of the whole business. He believed that scientific men had invented an instrument which would test the air and give warning in such cases. And he thought he could provide his right hon. Friend with a similar safeguard. The test was to be found in the cheers that he received in that House, and in the quarter from which they proceeded. During his two speeches the right hon. Gentleman had received continuous cheers from the Tory Benches, while silence reigned among his own supporters. And a Liberal Minister, instead of being gratified, should be warned that there must be something radically wrong when he thus received the enthusiastic approval of his political opponents. Proceeding to notice points in the Financial Statement the hon. Gentleman expressed his astonishment that the Secretary of State should declare that there was no Famine Insurance Fund, and that there had never been one. He did not know under what technical plea this statement could be justified. The fact was, that special new taxes were imposed for the express purpose of famine insurance. To quote the words of the Finance Minister, Sir John Strachey, the proceeds of these new taxes were to be expended for the purpose of providing what he called an insurance against famine, and for no other purpose whatever. Was that not a Famine Insurance Fund? Sir John Strachey called it a sacred trust. And if the proceeds of the taxes were not paid into a separate account in the name of trustees it was simply to avoid inconvenience in book-keeping. Being appealed to, the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, minuted to the following effect:—

> "The sole justification for the increased taxation which has just been imposed upon the people of India for the purpose of insuring this Empire against the worst calamities of future famine, so far as an insurance can now be practically provided, is the pledge we have given that a sum not less than £1,500,000 sterling, which exceeds the amount of the additional contributions obtained from the people for this purpose shall be annually applied to it."

The people, grown shy by sad experience, still doubted, and were severely rebuked by Lord Lytton. He again declared that the sole purpose of the additional taxation was to preserve from famine, and he said that to insinuate the contrary was to insinuate a calumny. What now was being done? The special taxes were still being levied, producing annually about Rx.1,750,000, and the Government proposed to apply these proceeds to increase official salaries. The right hon. Gentleman might call these transactions by such technical name as he liked, but the people of India considered that a distinct pledge had been broken, and that a great injustice had been done. He desired now to notice one or two points in the Financial Statement. Mr. Westland, as Finance Minister, had declared that exchange, and exchange only, was the cause of the present deficit. And the Secretary of State appeared to endorse this view; also Mr. Westland maintained that the increased cost of exchange exceeded the increase of net revenue. He (Sir W. Wedderburn) ventured to differ entirely from both these conclusions. To ascertain the facts he had taken a period of 10 years, dating back to the happy time when Lord Ripon and Sir Evelyn Baring (now Lord Cromer) were in charge of the finances, when there was a balance to the good, and when taxes were remitted. Comparing that time with the present it appeared that the increased annual cost of exchange was now about Rx.6,000,000, whereas the increased net revenue was Rx.8,500,000, showing an excess of Rx.2,500,000. Or taking the aggregate of 10 years the total excess was Rx.18,500,000, so that the expansion of revenue was enough to pay for the cost of exchange twice over. The real cause of the financial difficulty was the excessive unreproductive expenditure upon the Military and Civil Services. In all other departments, including those most beneficial to the people, the reductions had been very large. As compared with 10 years ago, the saving amounted to Rx.4,644,683, which exceeded the cost in exchange for those departments by Rx.873,602. On the other hand, instead of reductions, the Military and Civil Services cost Rx.8,854,346 a year more than they did 10 years ago; and this, together with Rx.3,322,786, the exchange connected with those Services, came to the great total of Rx.12,177,132, which swallowed up the surplus inherited from Lord Ripon, Rx.722,622, the whole increase of net revenue, Rx.9,604,871, and the savings in other departments, Rx.873,602, and in addition produced a deficit of Rx.976,637. All these figures had, on behalf of the people of India, been carefully placed before the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State; but, as already observed, he had not considered it necessary even to refer to these contentions in the statement he had just laid before the Committee. Another point to which he took strong exception in the right hon. Gentleman's speech was his statement that land revenue in India was not a tax upon the people, but only a share of the rent. This was, no doubt, the theory, but the practice was very different. He would beg to commend to his right hon. Friend the perusal of certain Minutes recorded in the Indian Council, which he would find at p. 134 of Appendix I. of the Famine Commission Report. These Minutes related to a proposal of Lord Hobart to stop all enhancements of the Land Revenue in the Madras Presidency. It there appears that the instruction of Sir Charles Wood was that the land revenue should not exceed one half of the free rent. But it was admitted that this was a "mere paper instruction." Sir Bartle Frere, than whom there was not a better practical authority on this point, stated that the State demand rarely if ever fulfilled the requirements of the India Office instruction, and that with the exception of a very few localities, infinitesimally small, a true Land Tax was practically unknown. As regards the Bombay Presidency, he said that the assessment came under three classes. First, a Land Tax fixed more or less arbitrarily; second, a full rent leaving nothing to the cultivator but the wages of his labour and the interest on his capital; and, third, a rent and something more trenching on the wages of labour or the profits of capital. To those three classes Sir Louis Mallet added yet another, where the land yielded no rent at all, and the assessment was taken wholly from that portion of the crop which represented the wages of labour. When his right hon. Friend had leisure to read the Famine Commission Report, the Report of the Dekkhan Riots Commission, and the Debates in Council regarding the Dekkhan Agriculturists Relief Act, he would doubtless modify very materially his views regarding the Indian cultivator's burdens and condition. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the cultivator's improvements were not taxed. How did he account for the enhancements in the Panwell Taluka which had been brought to his notice by a question in the House? An instance had been given where a cultivator's assessment had been raised from 4 rupees to 45 rupees. Was the difference the increase in the value of the land apart from the cultivator's industry? He would give the right hon. Gentleman a clue which he might follow up. Let him inquire what "Pot-Kharab" means in the Bombay Presidency, and he will find that these enhancements are upon reclamations and improvements within the cultivator's holding which he was encouraged to make by the promise that they would not be taxed. The right hon. Gentleman was very indignant because the Member for Flintshire said that there was corruption among the Settlement officers, but if he will inquire he will find that one main excuse for these enhancements was the alleged frauds on the part of the officials who made the original settlements. The objection taken to the military expenditure was one of policy more than account. He, in agreement with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, did not grudge money for the true defence and safety of India. But what he objected to was the policy of aggression upon our weaker neighbours, a policy equally unjust and dangerous. India was surrounded by a frontier of sterile-mountainous regions, inhabited by wild tribes. This constituted a natural rampart, like a thorny hedge, and it was perfect folly either to penetrate into that hedge or to destroy it. This policy of aggression was foreseen and denounced in the Viceroy's Council by Mr. Ilbert and Sir Auckland Colvin when the first great addition of 30,000 men was made to our Army with reference to the attack on Burma. These gentlemen said this increased force would be used for purposes of aggression, and not of defence, and this prophecy had come true. For purposes of defence in India, an efficient Regular Force was no doubt required, but the true safety of the country depended upon this force being backed by a full treasury and a contented people. Another important question was the fair distribution of the military burden between India and Great Britain. The conquest of Upper Burma was undertaken purely for supposed Imperial interests, and it was a burning shame that the whole expense had been placed upon the Indian taxpayer, who was entirely opposed to the whole business. During the last eight years a charge of some £12,500,000 had fallen upon India on account of Upper Burma, and it appeared likely that this charge would continue at the rate of about £1,500,000 annually. With such treatment was it to be wondered at that India was in financial difficulty? Among the remedies now required, one of the most important was a fair distribution of military expenditure between India and this country. Then there seemed no good reason why the Military and Civil expenditure should not be brought to the figure it stood at in 1884-5, during the happy time of Lord Ripon. The compensation to the Services should be suspended until the finances could afford this indulgence. And as regarded the future, care and economy would be insured if only £5 of the salary of the Secretary of State for India were put upon the Imperial Estimates. What did Mr. Disraeli say on this point?

> "Have the people of England ever cared one jot about Indian reform? No, they have not; and for this very simple reason—that the people of England do not pay for India; because so long as Indian finance is separated from English finance, and so long as the people of England do not pay in consequence of misgovernment in India, so long, depend upon it, they will not care for Indian reform."

This was a formidable indictment against our national honesty and unselfishness. He trusted his right hon. Friend would do his best to convince the people of India that their welfare was his first object.

*MR. H. H. FOWLER: It is now close on midnight, and, this being the third day that the question of Indian Finance has been under discussion, I think it will not be unreasonable to ask the Committee to close the Debate and let this interesting conversation come to an end. I regret that I cannot review at length the various criticisms, many of them very interesting and valuable, which have been made upon my statement. I trespassed upon the time of the Committee at great length at an early period of the evening, and not even for the sake of answering the objections which have been raised do I think I am justified in asking the Committee to undergo the weariness of listening to me again; but I can assure hon. Gentlemen who have spoken that the suggestions they have thrown out will not be lost sight of. Two or three of the questions which have been put to me, however, I will at once reply to. My right hon. Friend the Member for the Forest of Dean put a very direct and pertinent question as to the nature of the inquiry which has been promised for next year. I thought I had made it perfectly clear that it would be most undesirable to have a Select Committee to inquire into the policy of the administration of India. The Government have no intention of the sort. My right hon. Friend put to me the question as to whether the Committee should deal with the position of the Council and the Secretary of State. I may make that clear—certainly not. That is a question for hon. Members to bring before this House—it is a question of policy. The Committee is to inquire into the various items of expenditure solely from a financial point of view, and to see how the money is spent. There are various points which would come before the Committee for inquiry from the financial point of view, as to whether expenditure is excessive, the expenses of administration, and that much vexed question, the apportionment of charges paid here and in India. But I warn the Committee, and I warn my hon. Friends who are so desirous that these questions should be raised, that the responsibility of the inquiry must be with those who desire it. There are those who think that India pays too little, and there are friends of India who think she pays too much, and the result may be disappointing to either side. I express no opinion, for I have not had time to make investigation, but the Committee may report that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is entitled to a larger contribution from India than India pays, and, if so, it will not be upon my head the blame will rest for reopening this difficult and complicated question. Various points have been raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean as to the character and extent of the inquiry, but do not let him be under any delusion. We propose a Committee of a purely financial character, to deal with financial questions, and not to deal with questions of policy and general administration. My hon. Friend who has just sat down complains that I have not answered the Memorandum he sent to me. That Memorandum has been carefully considered in the India Office, and I have a complete reply to most of the various points raised in it; but when addressing to the Committee a three hours' speech on finance I thought it would be unnecessary to go into disputable questions in which I could not probably have convinced my hon. Friend, and he could not have convinced me. The hon. Member for Colne Valley (Sir J. Kitson) spoke with reference to the railway system. He made an interesting speech at an unfortunate hour in a thin

House, and his speech was worthy the attention of a much larger audience. His views were re-echoed by subsequent speakers, and all I can say is that I absolutely sympathise with the desire of the hon. Member for an extension of the railway system in India. I recognise that we cannot extend the guarantee system, and what we have to do is to encourage private capital to invest in the construction of railways in India. There is a controversy now going on between the Government of India and those who are interested in Railway Companies as to terms, and all I am at liberty to state is that at the present time the whole question is under the immediate consideration of the Government of India to see what modifications may be introduced into the terms of which several Members have complained. Into the field of bi-metallism I will not at this hour attempt to enter, and I hope Members who have devoted time to that will not complain if I do not attempt a reply. I can only say that we shall proceed with the experiment we are trying—that of closing the Mints. An hon. Member near me thinks the experiment has been an absolute failure, and he has criticised it in strong language, but at all events we have acted upon the opinion of those most competent to give advice; we attach importance to the judgment of experts on the subject, and we see no reason to doubt the wisdom of the policy we have adopted. I hope the Committee will be satisfied with this Debate, which, extended over three days upon various Indian matters, has been full of interest. I hope the increased interest taken in Indian matters will be productive of good results, that the criticisms made will be considered by those upon whom responsibility devolves to determine whether proposals shall be carried out, and that in any event the discussion we have had may tend to the advantage of India.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March 1893 was Rx.90,172,438; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.91,005,850; that there was an excess of Expenditure over Revenue of Rx.833,412; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,986,290.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL [*Lords*]. (No. 354.)

COMMITTEE.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 and 2 agreed to.

Clause 3.

On Motion of The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir J. Rigby, Forfar), the following Amendment was agreed to:—Page 2, line 39, leave out Sub-section (1).

Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, he wished respectfully to enter his objection, not intending to do more than make it formal, to the system the Statute Law Revision Committee had adopted of reviving enactments formerly repealed. It practically amounted to a surprise upon Parliament and to the legal profession. As he understood, by the sub-section it was proposed that a certain Scotch Act repealed many years ago—in 1888—an Act or part of an Act which had laid dormant all this time, should now be revived. This might be very proper; he was not complaining of the revival, but the revival should be by a new Act, and not by the machinery of a Statute Law Revision Bill. If he desired he might raise what he believed would be a fatal objection in calling attention to the fact that the title of the Bill indicated repeal, whereas this Bill revived an enactment already repealed. It should be the duty of the very eminent gentlemen who represented the legal profession or the Treasury Bench to insist that the Statute Law Revision Committee should do one of two things—either not revive an Act, or if there was any doubt as to its having been repealed by inadvertence they should revive it by substantive Act. He could not lay great blame on the Statute Law Revision Committee, considering their enormous labours, because they now and then made a mistake. He had himself come across four mistakes in repealing operative Acts causing great inconvenience to many persons. But when the Committee found they had made a mistake they should come frankly to Parliament and say so, and have the mistake rectified by a Bill. To do this by the Statute Law Revision Bill led to dangerous misunderstandings in the profession. He wanted the Attorney General to express an opinion in regard to the section he had amended.

*SIR J. RIGBY: Undoubtedly there are cases in which some slips have been made. It is, and it has been the practice, so I am told, for many years, where it has been made clear to the Committee that accidentally such a slip has taken place, to correct it in the Statute Law Revision Bill. Of course, such methods of correction are to be exercised with the utmost care, and in every such case it has been the practice since I have known anything of the proceedings of the Joint Committee to refer to every person who by any chance could throw any light on the subject, and the Committee only proceed in the way of reviving a section when it is quite clear that what has been done has been done inadvertently, and by a slip. In this particular case there has been no departure from the usual practice. There had been an undoubted slip in reference to a Scotch Act. This was carefully considered by the Joint Committee when it was thought that a slip had occurred, and the course pursued was that which had been taken in previous years, opportunity being taken to remedy the inadvertence. Wherever there is a doubt as to that being the proper course to pursue, the invariable practice of the Joint Committee has been to give way and not attempt to revive an enactment when there is any doubt as to the absolute safety of the course to be taken.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said, he had listened with great care to the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman, but it was no clearer to him now than it was before the explanation what the Committee was doing. As he understood, a Scotch Act, or a portion of a Scotch Act, had been repealed, and now the repealing statute was to be repealed. But surely they had been in the habit of knowing what they were enacting, and he desired to know what was the Act repealed; what was its object, and what had been the result?

*SIR J. RIGBY: In this particular instance it is only making the Statute Book in accordance with what has been done. By some slip in a Statute of 1888 some words—one or two words—of the Statute were left out enabling different authorities to collect taxes. They have gone on as if there had been no alteration at all; it was not noticed that an alteration had taken place, and there was no alteration in practice.

DR. CLARK: The Local Authorities in Scotland have been collecting taxes illegally?

*SIR J. RIGBY: No, not at all. It was only a doubt, a certain doubt. The point had never been raised by anyone. Of course, if there had been a repeal of this power it would never have been used. It is only a certain doubt, to be cleared away by this alteration.

DR. CLARK said, he did not yet know the object. Who were the Local Authorities—were they Poor Law Authorities, were they Municipal Authorities who had been acting in this fashion? He thought before they re-enacted a law which had been repealed they ought to know specifically what they were doing. Perhaps, as this was a Scotch matter, the Lord Advocate would be able to tell Members of the Committee what they were doing? All he had gathered was that in 1888 there was a clause repealed, that municipal or other authorities did not know that, and had gone on collecting taxes when they actually had not authority to do so, or there was a doubt about it, and now the Local Authorities were to have the power given them. Really the Committee should know more about this.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) said, there was one point upon which perhaps the Attorney General could enlighten the Committee. It appeared that the Local Authorities had had no legal power to make the collections during the years since 1888. Was it competent for anyone who had made payments during the time to bring an action against a Local Authority for illegal collection of taxes?

DR. CLARK said, if no explanation was forthcoming he should take a Division. There should be some reference to the subject by the Attorney General or the Lord Advocate.

MR. ALBAN GIBBS (London) suggested they might be allowed to know the name of the Act in question.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes 58; Noes none.—(Division List, No. 234.)

Remaining Clauses and Schedule agreed to.

Preamble.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he had ventured to suggest on the last occasion when the Bill was before the House that a little more time should be allowed to consider it; and as the result of such examination as he had been able to make he had one or two suggestions to offer, which, however, he would defer to the Report. As the object of this legislation was simplicity and the prevention of repetition, was it not foolish to deal with two clauses of the old Merchant Shipping Acts, seeing that the House had passed an Act repealing the whole and consolidating the provisions.

Preamble agreed to.

Bill reported, with an Amendment; as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

BURIALS BILL.—(No. 33.)

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of the Great Northern and certain other Railway Companies) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c. Canals) Bill.

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 8) (River Cam, &c.) Bill,

Amendments to—

Prize Courts Bill [*Lords*].

Crown Lands Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 4) (Birmingham Canal) Bill,

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 10) (Lagan, &c. Canals) Bill,

Changed from—

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Lagan, &c. Canals) Bill, with Amendments,

Uniforms Bill, with an Amendment.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS—(No. 348) [*changed from* "CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS)"]—BILL.

THIRD READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [14th August], "That the Bill be now read the third time."

And which Amendment was, to leave out the words "now read the third time," and add the words "re-committed in respect of Clauses 24 and 25."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

COPYHOLD CONSOLIDATION BILL [*Lords*].

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [*Lords*].—(No. 344.)

As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 359.)

Read a second time, and committed for Saturday.

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) [REDEMPTION].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland by payment of a capital sum, to authorise the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

NATIONAL GALLERY (IRELAND).

Copy presented,—of Report of the Director to the Board of Governors and Guardians for the year 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

STAMPS (CONTRACT OF MESSRS. DE LA RUE).

Copy presented,—of Treasury Minute, dated 6th August, 1894, relating to the Contract of Messrs. De la Rue for the Supply of Stamps for the use of the Inland Revenue and Post Office Departments, including those on Postcards and Wrappers [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CONVICT PRISONS (ENGLAND, &c.)

Copy presented,—of Report of Directors for 1893–4 (Parts I. and II.) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented,—of Seventeenth Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix (Parts I. and II.) for the year ended 31st March, 1894; to lie upon the Table.

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy presented,—of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales for 1893 (Equity, Common Law, Civil and Canon Law), hitherto published as Part II. of the Judicial Statistics of England and Wales [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (BRECONSHIRE).

Copy presented,—of Order of the Brecon County Council altering Polling Districts in the County [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (COURTS MARTIAL).

Copy presented,—of Returns of the number of Courts Martial held during 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (HEALTH).

Copy presented,—of Statistical Report of the Health of the Navy for the year 1893 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (SEA-GOING WARSHIPS, &c.).

Return presented,—relative thereto (in continuation of Parliamentary Papers, No. 396, of Session 1890-91, and No. 372, of Session 1893-4) [ordered 19th July; *Lord George Hamilton*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 299.]

PUBLIC TRUSTEE (FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Address for "Return of any State Regulations in force in the United States of America, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, Belgium, and Sweden and Norway to secure the honest Administration of Trusts, and as to the office and remuneration of a Public Trustee."—(*Colonel Howard Vincent.*)

PUBLIC TRUSTEE (COLONIES).

Address for "Return of any State Regulations in force in Canada, New Zealand, Victoria, New South Wales, or Cape Colony to secure the honest Administration of Trusts, and as to the office and remuneration of a Public Trustee."—(*Colonel Howard Vincent.*)

ARMY GUNS (RIFLED, IRON, AND STEEL).

Address for "Return showing the number, description, name of designer, place of manufacture, and actual cost of the various Rifled Iron and Steel Guns supplied to the Naval and Land Services during the year 1892-3, showing whether each Gun is Land or Naval (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 166, of Session 1893)."—(*Mr. Batty Langley.*)

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House, this day, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 17th August 1894.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—

Charitable Trusts Acts Amendment.

Industrial Schools.

British Museum (Purchase of Land).

Locomotive Threshing Engines.

Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Acts Amendment.

Nautical Assessors (Scotland).

Public Libraries (Ireland) Acts Amendment.

Prize Courts.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1).

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2).

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15).

Education Provisional Order Confirmation (London).

Elementary Education Provisional Orders Confirmation (Barry, &c.).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 1) (Canals of the Great Northern and certain other Railway Companies).

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 2) (Bridgewater, &c. Canals).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c. Canals).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 5) (Regent's Canal).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 8) (River Cam, &c.).

Canal Tolls and Charges Provisional Order (No. 9) (Canals of Caledonian and North British Railway Companies).

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges Provisional Order (No. 11) (Grand Canal, &c.).

CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

Moved—

"That the Lord Privy Seal (*Lord Tweedmouth*) do take the Chair this day in Committee of the Whole House in the absence of the Chairman of Committees."—(*The Marquess of Ripon.*)

Motion agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 212.)

REPORT.

Amendments reported (according to Order).

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, I think, in moving that the Report be received, it would be convenient that I should state shortly the course the Government mean to take with regard to the principal points left over from yesterday's discussion. The first point arises on Clause 19. Upon that clause I was asked whether some change would not be regarded as advisable by Her Majesty's Government, in reference to determining the elections of chairmen of Parish Councils by lot. After looking at the clause, it seems to me that the words referring to that provision are not required at all, because in the previous Sub-section 5 it is provided that the chairman shall have in cases of equality a casting vote. The words are—

> "At every meeting the chairman shall have a deliberative as also in cases of equality a casting vote."

I think the case is completely met by that provision, and I propose to leave out the words as to decision by lot. The Duke of Argyll proposed an alteration in Clause 26 in regard to crofters' holdings being exempted from this Act. Well, my Lords, I have looked into this question closely, and I think there would be very great difficulties in making such an alteration in the Bill as it stands. The words were not inserted as the measure was originally introduced by the Government, but were put in in Grand Committee on the motion of Mr. Angus Sutherland, and were agreed to unanimously. All parties having approved, I think to go behind that position now would not be desirable or conducive to the harmony of the two Houses. I come now to Clause 30, with regard to charities. Upon that I would make an offer.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh moved three or four Amendments on this clause, and I think has got rather more than he expected. At any rate, not content with hitting me with one barrel he has hit me with two. He argued that it was right to put in a limitation of 40 years, both prospective and retrospective, so that the provisions of the Bill giving power to Parish Councils over parish charities in reference to the appointment of trustees on the various Trust Boards, should not apply to charities until that time had elapsed from the date of their foundation, or, in the case of charities where the donor was still living, not until 40 years from the date of the passing of the Act. The noble Lord urged that he was following the provisions in the English Act. As he has attained his object as to the 40 years, I think he might agree to the English precedent with regard to this question of trustees. I can give my noble Friend this assurance—that if he is willing to assent to the restoration of the Bill to the condition it was when it came to us with regard to the appointment of trustees by Parish Councils for charitable trusts, I will undertake on behalf of the Government that the clause shall receive no other Amendment in the House of Commons—that any Amendment in it will not be supported or agreed to by the Government. I hope my noble Friend will agree to this. The other Amendments standing in my name are purely in drafting. As to my noble Friend's other two Amendments, I shall be glad to assent to the second in reference to gas, but I cannot give the same assent to the first.

*Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH desired to say most frankly that, on the whole, the noble Lord had met the views of those on his side of the House in a conciliatory spirit, although he thought that the concessions that had been made were not any greater than they were in fairness entitled to. He thought the suggestion might have been accepted that a distinction should be drawn between land cultivated by the crofters and township pasture land. On the distinct understanding that the Government would support the clause as altered, he was prepared to accede to the proposal that his Amendment limiting the number of trustees should be deleted from the Bill, the proviso as to the 40 years remaining in and being supported by the Government in another place should any exception be taken to it. As to his next Amendment, the County Council of Stirling, at whose instance it was suggested, would be gratified to hear that it had been accepted. That acceptance would be welcomed in all parts of Scotland, certainly wherever large populations existed within the limits of landward parishes. He regretted that the second of the Amendments standing in his name, which referred to Sub-section 2 of Clause 13, could not be accepted. While realising the difficulty that the Government would have to meet, he pointed out that the clause as it stood gave rise to a very great anomaly. For example, Motherwell, in the parish of Bothwell, Lanarkshire, contained only eight electors, with a valuation of £230. They, however, would be entitled to elect one Councillor, the same as each of the other wards of the parish, none of which contained a population of less than 5,000 persons. The want of fairness of representation that would exist if the clause was not altered was, he thought, conclusively proved by the fact he had just cited.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN asked the noble Lord in charge of the Bill to call the attention of the House particularly, in going through the Amendments, to those on which any question of substance arose.

Verbal and drafting Amendments.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN, on Clause 24, suggested that an oversight had occurred, no provision having been made that in the event of Parish Councils not requiring land for the public purposes for which they had acquired it the original proprietor should have the right to re-acquire it.

*Lord TWEEDMOUTH said, any alteration of that kind would require the addition of considerable machinery to give effect to it; and though he sympathised with the noble Marquess in his proposal, it could not be accepted.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN urged, as discussion had become somewhat irregular, that unless provision of this kind were made, great nuisance and annoyance might be occasioned to a proprietor. A precedent existed in the case of railways and other undertakings, and the matter was of considerable importance. This might happen: unused land might be acquired by some person simply for the purpose of causing annoyance to the former proprietor, who would be compelled to pay an enormous ransom price. It was certainly a case for consideration by the Government.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN added that it would be inadvisable to put so great a temptation in the way of Parish Councils, who might compulsorily acquire land at a small price and re-sell it to other persons at an enormous profit.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH thought these apprehensions need not be seriously entertained. All these matters would require the assent of the Board, who certainly would be memorialised from the locality in any such case of the disposal of surplus land as the noble Marquess suggested; and in that case the Board would refuse its consent.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said that would be so only where money was borrowed.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, they would hardly be able to acquire land without borrowing.

THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN was not so sure of that.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the noble Marquess must suppose that the Parish Councils were going to have command of enormous sums of money. It was quite clear they would have to borrow for these purposes and the transactions would require to be sanctioned by the Board. He would point out that the House was now on Report and not in Committee, and he could not see his way to accept the Amendment now, though the matter would be considered if possible.

Verbal Amendments.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH moved, in Clause 44, after Sub-section (4), to insert—

"Upon the formation of a special lighting district under the provisions of this section it shall be lawful for the district committee to adopt the Burghs (Scotland) Gas Supply Act, 1876, subject to the provisions of the principal Act with respect to capital expenditure, borrowing, and audit of accounts; and in the application of the former Act the expression 'burgh' shall be construed to mean special lighting district, 'Commissioners,' 'Town Council,' and 'Commissioners of Police,' to mean district committee, and 'elector' and 'ratepayer' to mean a person registered as a county elector the subject of whose qualification is situated within the special lighting district."

Amendment agreed to.

Standing Order No. XXXIX. considered (according to Order) and dispensed with.

Bill read 3^a with the Amendments.

On Question, That the Bill do pass?

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN called attention to the proviso with regard to crofters' holdings, and he urged that the Government should take into consideration the difference between arable and pasture land under the Crofters' Holding Act. As the Duke of Argyll reminded the House on the previous occasion, these pasturage holdings were of large extent, and along the coast and in the Western Islands lands were acquired for fishing purposes and for other public uses. If there were no power to deal with the holdings it would be impossible for land to be taken where required. That was a matter which should receive attention, for, as many of these holdings were of large acreage, great inconvenience might result if no change was made in that direction.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH said, the noble Earl had in his remarks rather overstated the position. If a change were now made it might not be accepted in the other House and might be sent back. The words in question were adopted unanimously in Standing Committee. For the other point, as to the distinction between arable land and pasturage in the occupation of crofters, there appeared at first sight something to be said, but on consideration it raised much difficulty. The invariable complaint of crofters had been, not that they had insufficient arable land, but that their pasturage, their outrun, was not sufficient. There might be pasturage in the hands of crofters which could be properly used for these purposes, but whenever necessary probably means would be found to give effect to the wishes of the noble Earl. On the whole, substantial justice would be done by leaving the clause as it was, and it would be much wiser not to make any further change in the provisions of the Bill.

Verbal Amendment.

Privilege Amendments.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH desired to express the satisfaction which all must feel that both sides of the House had come so near complete agreement in the shaping of this measure. It had never been their practice in Scotland to make municipal and local concerns matter of Party conflict; and he was glad to think that this Bill, which was in great measure the complement of the measure passed by the late Government in 1889, should have passed both Houses without strong cleavage upon Party lines. For himself, he desired to say that he should use whatever influence he might possess to secure that the Bill should receive a hearty welcome and be fairly tried. He believed a great deal might be done to make the measure work successfully if they continued as they had begun, and did not regard it as a Party victory on one side or the other. On one or two points in the Bill, however, he was sorry to say he did not entirely concur, speaking, of course, simply for himself. He regretted the constitution of the Central Board was fixed as it was, as some danger might arise in connection with it. He sincerely hoped the tendency of administration under the Bill would not be to remove business to London which ought to be decided in Edinburgh, where at present matters were dealt with by the Board of Supervision which had been easily accessible to representations and to deputations of all kinds. He looked with some jealousy on the position which was assigned to the Secretary for Scotland on the new Board. In his opinion, the Secretary's position ought to be one of two things—either, as in the English system, he ought to be personally responsible, or he should not be a member of the Board at all, the Board, however, reporting to him, and he having a power of recommendation or veto or even direct control. He feared there would be a tendency, not great at first, but ever increasing, to transfer more and more the business of the Board from Edinburgh to London. Upon another point he felt some disappointment. He thought the mode in which the Act was to be brought into operation and the time at which the first election was to take place were extremely unfortunate. It would have been much better, in his opinion, to have postponed the election until the autumn of next year. The Government, he was certain, had under-estimated the necessary difficulties which would arise in making so considerable a change in administration. Between the 1st of April and the 15th of May the business of 900 parishes would have to be transferred from the Parochial Boards to the Parish Councils, and, as the rural parishes in Scotland had, generally speaking, no expert staff, very considerable difficulty was certain to arise. He hoped that, at any rate, the Government would constitute the Central Board at the earliest possible moment, in order that correspondence with reference to the transfer of duties might at once be begun. He was sorry that the Government had done away with the unofficial element on the Central Board. There were three or four unpaid members on the Board of Supervision, and he was certain that their presence was one cause why by the smoothing of asperities among the permanent officials that Board had worked so harmoniously in the past. He could only repeat that he would do everything in his power personally to enable the Act to be brought into successful operation.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY AND LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of ROSEBERY): My Lords, I am sure that on the part of the Government I can fully reciprocate the feeling expressed by the noble Lord. It is only what we should have expected from so conciliatory and so able a Member of this House. I am inclined to attribute the easy and well-oiled passage of the Bill to two considerable circumstances. In the first place, I attribute it largely to the beneficent experiment of a Scotch Grand Committee, in which, by a mechanism which might well be carried further with advantage, the affairs of Scotland have been dealt with in a manner more complete, more efficient, and less annoying—if I may so speak without offence—to the general body of Members of the Sister Kingdom than has hitherto been the case. In the second place, I attribute it to something more permanent, I am happy to say, than even the Scotch Grand Committee—the abiding common sense of the Representatives of Scotland in both Houses. The noble Lord complained of the Bill being brought into operation so early; but that is the result of the general agreement of Scotch Representatives in the other House, which the Government cannot afford to disregard. I think the noble Lord a little overrates the ability of his fellow-countrymen, in bringing an Act of this kind into early operation. I can assure the noble Lord that the Government will use every exertion to bring the Central Board into power at as early a date as is possible. Then with regard to the constitution of the Board, the noble Lord is afraid the Board will suffer from the absence of the unofficial non-salaried members. But this is to be a working Board. Is it wise that there should be ornamental members on that Board, who only attend occasionally, and in many cases do not attend at all? What object is to be gained by contact with those elements of light and leading? Can the noble Lord point to any case in which the Board of Supervision has practically benefited by the attendance of unofficial members? As a matter of fact, it was notorious that the Board of Supervision was a body which could have been comprised by a much smaller number of hats than were worn by its members. I am averse to the constitution of those nominal Committees or Boards which have so long obtained in Scotland for the transaction of business. The whole tendency of the age is to have business Boards, and that every Board should be composed simply of the people who really do the work. I have always failed to see the advantage arising from the ornamental constitution of such bodies as the Board of Trade, the Local Government Board, and the Committee of Council on Education in Scotland, and I will never agree to any extension of the principle. I think the apprehension of the noble Lord that the fact of the Secretary for Scotland being Chairman of the Board will have the tendency to draw the Board to London is rather illusory. What is the case in Ireland? The Chief Secretary is Chairman of the Irish Local Government Board, but that does not produce any tendency towards bringing the Board to London. Where the work is there the Board must remain, and I can assure the noble Lord that the influence of the Government will be used in the direction of making his fear illusory.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION AND EVICTED FARMS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Earl of COURTOWN, in the absence of the Earl of Arran, asked Her Majesty's Government whether it was the case that last autumn Mathew Leonard took an evicted farm in County Sligo, that he was then summoned to appear before the Bunnimadden branch of the Irish National Federation, that he refused to obey the summons, that a meeting of the Federation was shortly afterwards held about a mile from Leonard's lands, that at that meeting one speaker said—

> "There is a passage of Scripture which says that the lepers came to our Saviour to be cured, some with their toes off and some with their joints loose; they repented, and he cured them of their disease. There are three toes off Mathew, and let him not stay until his ten toes are off, and we will not take him back. He will be late then, and we will have the farm . . . . The two principal shopkeepers of Tobercurry who are supplying Mathew with goods will be known. So much for grabberism. I will denounce —— and every one of them. There are good men here who would do seven months—seven years—for a slimy land-grabber like that. Shun him like a mad dog."

That another speaker said—

> "There are numerous graveyards around here, but Mathew will hardly be buried in one of them. The limekilns are more numerous and I would venture to say he will be buried, in one of them."

That in consequence of that meeting four people (including the above speakers) were, by order of the Attorney General, charged at the Ballymote Petty Sessions with incitement to violence; that no evidence was called for the defendants; that the Bench being equally divided, the order was "No rule"; whether the Attorney General took any further steps?

Lord MONKSWELL replied that he regretted to say language substantially the same as that quoted was used at a meeting on August 20, 1893. The prosecution to which the noble Earl referred was the subject of a question in the House of Commons on the 6th of November, 1893. On that occasion Mr. J. Morley, in justifying the withdrawal of the prosecution as, in all the circumstances, the best course to be adopted, added very significantly that the hands of the Crown were not tied if the defendants should provoke further action against Leonard. Leonard, who had full police protection, had not since been interfered with by the Federation, and no proceedings had therefore been taken. His information was to the effect that Leonard had been severely boycotted, but that he was now relieved to a certain extent. The Magistrates having disagreed, it did not appear to the Executive that there was any certainty that if a prosecution was entered upon it would be successful. The Executive, therefore, came to the conclusion that on the whole the best course would be to drop the prosecution and to trust to the warning given to the men, first by the initial action of the Attorney General, and, secondly, by the answer of Mr. Morley in the House of Commons. That course had so far had the merit of being successful, because the Federation had not since interfered with Leonard. In reply to the further questions asked by the Earl of Courtown, he stated that the speeches referred to were published in the local Nationalist journal, and two Resident Magistrates were in favour of the prosecution. One of the other Magistrates was appointed in August, 1893, three weeks before the proceedings were taken.

MARINE INSURANCE BILL.

BILL PRESENTED.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL), in presenting a Bill for the purpose of codifying the law relating to Marine Insurance, said: I desire to state that of course I do not do so with any idea of proceeding with the measure this Session. The Bill is an attempt to deal with the subject of marine insurance in the same manner as the Legislature has already dealt with the subject of bills of exchange and the law relating to the sale of goods. It has been drawn by Judge Chalmers, of the Birmingham County Court, who has rendered invaluable service in connection with former Acts codifying particular branches of the law. The work has been done by him in addition to his official duties, which are heavy, simply from a desire to render public service. I have myself been through the provisions of the Bill, and I believe that it states the existing law on the subject. My object in presenting the Bill now is to invite criticism and suggestions upon it from those conversant with the subject before it is brought before Parliament next Session.

Bill for codifying the law relating to Marine Insurance—Was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1^a; and to be printed. (No. 219.)

EQUALISATION OF RATES (LONDON) BILL.—(No. 207.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1.

*LORD WELBY moved an Amendment to Sub-section 7, providing for an audit by a district auditor of the accounts of the parishes which received grants under the Bill. He said, that he should have hoped for some encouragement from the Prime Minister, but that perhaps at that period of the Session he must not be sanguine; that in another place fears had been expressed that the Bill would lead to extravagance, and its object thus frustrated; that, in the words of Mr. Goschen, the gain to the constituents would be loss to the Metropolis, and ultimately to the constituents themselves, unless the Bill were so hedged round as to secure increased efficiency in the application of the funds. On the point of financial check there lies an obvious deficiency in the Bill, since it only required the rendering of a statement of expenditure by the Sanitary Authority, unaccompanied by any provision for independent audit. He was quite aware that an independent audit did not necessarily stop extravagance, but it would stop irregular expenditure, and would have a tendency to curb extravagance if the Report of the auditor was published. It might be said that there was already a local auditor of these charges appointed by the ratepayers. That was so, but that auditor was not an expert, and the Bill did not even provide for the appending of his certificate to the account. Appending the certificate of a local auditor would hardly be satisfactory, and an unaudited account was worthless. They had, however, at hand an expert in the district auditor appointed by the Local Government Board, and he suggested that the Report of that officer upon the expenditure of the grant should be obtained before any further issue was made to a Sanitary Authority out of the equalisation grant. Some day an extended public audit of all local expenditure would be required, but that day was possibly distant. In the meantime, there could be no harm in adopting the system suggested in the Amendment.

Amendment moved, in Sub-section 7, page 2, line 27, add at end of the sub-section the words—

(" and the amount of such expenses shall, before any further payment is made to such authority, be audited by a district auditor ").

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I welcome this Amendment with the greatest sincerity, though I am quite unable to adopt it, because it has afforded my noble Friend an opportunity for the first time of making a contribution to the Debates in this House upon a subject in which he is an expert. I trust we shall often have similar opportunities. I am far from contending that the system of auditing the accounts of District Boards is perfect, and, in fact, I am very much inclined to agree with the opinion of the noble Lord that an independent audit is desirable. I think, however, that the present proposal will rather tend to increase the anomalies of the present system than to diminish them, because in the parishes which pay the result will remain as at present, and in the parishes which receive the grant there will be a double audit — audit as at present and audit by the district auditor. I am inclined to think that such a large reform as this would imply still larger reforms, and the suggested reform is not one which can be brought about on this occasion or in this Bill. I think it ought to be carefully considered whether some reform of the system of audit should not be adopted for all Boards instead of for a part of them; but in order to do this, more time will be needed for the consideration of the subject than could be obtained at this period of the Session. Full opportunity should also be afforded to the bodies affected to express their opinions and to offer suggestions. If my noble Friend in the leisure of the recess will undertake to deal with this question as a whole, and bring in a well-considered measure, or suggest one to be brought into the other House, I am sure it will receive the most favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Bill reported, without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

BUILDING SOCIETIES (No. 2) BILL. (No. 208.)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he had some drafting Amendments on this clause, but they made no alteration in its substance.

Amendments agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that at the end of Clause 2 he proposed to insert this section—

" Shall not come into operation until 12 months after the passing of the Act."

That was to comply with a pledge that was given in the other House that that provision should be inserted.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 9, inclusive, agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL), after Clause 9, moved to insert a new clause, which provided that on the dissolution or winding-up of a Company the persons who had received an advance should only be required to repay under the conditions of the Society the money which had been advanced. This also was in accordance with a pledge given.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH asked if the clause proposed to be inserted was in the terms of either of the clauses on the Paper?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, No; it was a combination of Amendments put down by Mr.

Williams and himself. It was in these terms—

> "In the dissolution or winding-up of a Society under the Building Societies Acts, a member on whose shares an advance has been made shall not be liable to pay the amount payable under any mortgage or other security, or under the Rules of the Society, except at the time or times and subject to the conditions expressed in the security or Rules."

Amendment agreed to.

Verbal Amendments in Clause 10.

Clause 11.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, his Amendments were merely with regard to providing voting papers.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 12.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) proposed, in line 35, after "Scotland," to insert "Ireland." This also was to fulfil an undertaking given in the other House.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14 agreed to, with drafting Amendment.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that then there was a new clause extending the powers for investments, which also was practically agreed upon in the other House. Its object was to give, in addition to their powers of investment, powers to Trustees to invest. Substantially, it was the same as the proposal made by Mr. Bill.

Amendment agreed to.

Clauses 15 to 19, inclusive, agreed to.

Clause 20.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, he had to propose several drafting Amendments which had been made with a view to making the clause workable.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 21 agreed to.

Lord Herschell

Clause 22.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said, he understood the noble and learned Lord did not object to insert 1856 for 1855 in this clause.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL): No.

Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) said, that then there was a new clause proposed after 22—

> "The forms in the Schedule to this Act shall, after the commencement of this Act, be used under the Building Societies Acts."

Amendment agreed to.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH asked the noble and learned Lord whether he objected to the insertion of the new clause suggested by Lord Wemyss, which would come in after Clause 23 if at all?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) did not think it was possible to accept this clause. It was a provision that Building Societies might register under the Companies Acts, but it provided they might do so notwithstanding that neither the amount of capital nor the number of shares was fixed. Those were two things which went to the very root of the Companies Acts. It was proposed that the Companies Acts should apply with such modifications as might be found necessary, but there was no provision as to who was to determine the modifications, and it would not work without the requisite machinery.

Amendment negatived.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 26, inclusive, agreed to.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HERSCHELL) moved to leave out the first Schedule and insert a new Schedule in the form of a table containing particulars to be set forth in the case of a mortgage where the repayments are not upwards of 12 months in arrears, and the property has not been upwards of 12 months in possession of the Society, and where the present debt exceeds £5,000; also particulars to be set forth in the case of property of which the Society has been upwards of 12 months in possession, and in the case of a mortgage where the repayments are upwards of 12 months in arrear and the property has not been upwards of 12 months in possession of the Society.

Amendment agreed to.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

Verbal Amendments.

Standing Committee negatived; The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next.

ALLEGED PERJURY IN THE DUBLIN BANKRUPTCY COURT.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD CLONCURRY asked Her Majesty's Government whether they had read in the Dublin papers of the 15th August the following:—

"Yesterday, in the Court of Bankruptcy, Judge Boyd, with reference to the case of Carew, an arranging debtor, said that certain bills were produced and tendered to the assignees for distribution to the creditors. These bills were suspected not to be all right, and it was also suspected that the names of the surety on them and of the witness to the signatures of the surety were not in the handwriting of the parties represented. In consequence of this, witnesses were examined, including Mr. Carew, who stated that the signatures were right and that he saw them attached, and he produced an affidavit of a witness to the signatures—a clerk of his own—certifying that he was present and that he saw the documents executed. That clerk was subsequently examined before him (Judge Boyd), and had to admit that not one of the signatures of the surety was attached in his presence, and that he had signed several of the names himself. Under these circumstances, he (Judge Boyd) thought it right for the due administration of justice that the depositions taken in the case should be sent to the Attorney General with a view to prosecuting the clerk for perjury, and Mr. Carew for subornation of perjury, Mr. Carew, in his opinion, being the chief offender. He found that, in the exercise of his discretion, the Attorney General sent up no bill against Carew. The dupe, Ryan, the clerk, who was tried at the Clonmel Assizes, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. The Lord Chief Justice, who tried the case, was pleased to express the opinion at the time that he considered Mr. Carew, as he (Judge Boyd) did, as the chief offender, and that if he had been tried and convicted before him he would have sentenced him to five years' penal servitude. But this gentleman had been allowed to go scot-free, notwithstanding that he (Judge Boyd) had considered it necessary that he should draw the attention of the Attorney General to this gross attempt to defeat justice. He would consider what steps might still be taken to see that justice was not defeated. He had frequently to remark upon the inefficient manner in which prosecutions directed by that Court had been carried out."

Also, what was the explanation of the Attorney General for Ireland of the matter stated in the Judgment?

LORD MONKSWELL said, that the Papers in this case had been placed before the Attorney General for Ireland by the Chief Crown Solicitor in April last. From these it appeared that Ryan had committed perjury, and that there was very strong ground for supposing that he had been instigated by his employer, Carew, to make the statements, although there was no evidence to that effect. The Attorney General had directed a prosecution in the case of O'Brien, and the attention of the Attorney General had been directed to the observations of the learned Judge who tried the case, and he had since called for a Report and had promised to consider the question when it came to hand whether there was sufficient evidence to justify a prosecution against Carew. In conclusion, he assured the noble Lord that prosecutions were made in all those cases where the evidence warranted such a course.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND) BILL.—(No. 215.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, the object of this Bill is to provide facilities for the sale of land to tenants by the Board. Clause 1 provides two methods whereby, when the Land Commission advance the purchase money, either the guarantee deposit need not be retained or the provisions of the Purchase Act of 1891 as to the purchaser's insurance money shall not operate, *i.e.*, the annuity shall not be more than 4 per cent. By the first method the Board may guarantee the payment of an amount equal to the guarantee deposit. Under Section 3 of the Purchase Act of 1885 the Land Commission are empowered to retain out of the purchase money a guarantee deposit of not less than one-fifth of the advance. By the second method the Board may guarantee the payment of such sums as would otherwise have been set off by the Land Commission against the purchaser's insurance money. Under Section 8 of the Purchase Act of 1891 when the advance is less than 20 times the annual value of the holding, then for the first five years of the term the annuity must be 80 per cent. of the annual value, and the excess of such annuity over an annuity of 4 per cent. is the purchaser's insurance money. After five years the annuity may be reduced to 4 per cent., and after 18 years to 3 per cent. or less. By Sub-section 2 the sums payable by the Board under a guarantee are to be paid out of the moneys at their disposal and are to be applied as if they were the guarantee deposit or the purchaser's insurance. Under Sub-section 3 these sums are to be debts from the purchaser to the Board and are to be a charge on the holding. Under Sub-section 4 the Treasury are to fix the amount up to which the Board may give guarantees. Clause 2 proposes, for the purpose of taking land by the Board, to incorporate the voluntary provisions of the Lands Clauses Acts. These provisions include powers for entering into agreements for the purchase of land, for ascertaining the amount of compensation in case of parties under disability, for applying the purchase money, for dealings by parties having limited interests, &c. Under Clause 3 the Bill also proposes additional powers with reference to the appointment of officers for the Board—the provisions of the Purchase Act of 1891 in that behalf having been found to be inconvenient and inadequate. Under Section 40 (1) of the Purchase Act of 1891 the officers of the Land Commission were to discharge duties for the Board. The clause proposes to enable to Lord Lieutenant with the sanction of the Treasury to authorise the Board to appoint their own officers who are to be on the permanent staff of the Land Commission and also to employ such persons as they may require temporarily who are to be paid out of the votes. The Bill has a supplemental provision in the same direction as the Congested Districts Board Act of last Session. This Act enabled the Board to acquire land and constituted them landlords of any land so acquired. The land is to be held by two members of the Board as Trustees. I may add that the Bill is an absolutely non-contentious measure, and was introduced in the Commons by the Chief Secretary and Mr. Arthur Balfour, and passed through that House without opposition. I ask your Lordships to give it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

JURIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—(No. 216.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord MONKSWELL: This Bill is to remove a hardship on special jurors in Ireland, who have under the existing law to attend Assizes whether there is business or not. I beg to move its Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC BILL. (No. 218.)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Lord MONKSWELL: I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill. It was drafted to carry out the recommendations of the Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, appointed in May 1893, to inquire into the manner in which the Railway Companies had carried out the powers conferred on them by Parliament in 1892, with reference to traffic rates. While the Bill was in the House of Commons prolonged negotiations took place, at the instance of the President of the Board of Trade, between the Railway Company and the trades, and by a process of concession on both sides the measure was practically made non-controversial. Certain Amendments were put in the Bill during its progress through the House of Commons; but I do not know that I need call attention to them in detail. I will only say that they were practically agreed upon by both Companies and trades; and consequently this Bill now comes to your Lordships as an absolutely non-contentious measure.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." (*The Lord Monkswell.*)

Motion agreed to; Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

COPYHOLD CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].—(No. 171.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 153.)

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

UNIFORMS BILL.—(No. 175.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendment agreed to.

CHIMNEY SWEEPERS BILL.—(No. 192.)

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (BORROWING POWERS) BILL. (No. 209.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

MERCHANT SHIPPING BILL.—(No. 204.)

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next.

HERITABLE SECURITIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.—(No. 202.)

Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

QUARRIES BILL [H.L.].—(No. 149.)

Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

EXPIRING LAWS CONTINUANCE BILL.—(No. 217.)

Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Monday next (The Earl of Chesterfield). (No. 220.)

COPYHOLD (CONSOLIDATION) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 171.)

Commons Amendment considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

COAL MINES (CHECK WEIGHER) BILL [H.L.].—(No. 153.)

Commons Amendments considered (on Motion), and agreed to.

House adjourned at five minutes past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

* * *

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 17th August 1894.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Amendments to—

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Bill [Lords].

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners;—

The House went;—and being returned;—

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to,—

Charitable Trusts (Places of Religious Worship) Amendment Act, 1894.

Industrial Schools Acts Amendment Act, 1894.

British Museum (Purchase of Land) Act, 1894.

Locomotive Threshing Engines Act, 1894.

Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Acts Amendment Act, 1894.

Nautical Assessors (Scotland) Act, 1894.

Public Libraries (Ireland) Act, 1894.

Prize Courts Act, 1894.

Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1894.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Act, 1894.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Act, 1894.

Local Government Board's Provisional Orders Confirmation (No. 15) Act, 1894.

Education Department Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Act, 1894.

Education Department Provisional Orders Confirmation (Barry, &c.) Act, 1894.

Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 1) (Canals of the Great Northern and certain other Railway Companies) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges (No. 2) (Bridgewater, &c., Canals) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 3) (Aberdare, &c., Canals) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 5) (Regent's Canal) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 7) (River Ancholme, &c.) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 8) (River Cam, &c.) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Tolls and Charges (No. 9) (Canals of the Caledonian and North British Railway Companies) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

Canal Rates, Tolls, and Charges (No. 11) (Grand Canal) Order Confirmation Act, 1894.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Local Government (Scotland) Bill.

Heritable Securities (Scotland) Bill.

QUESTIONS.

BRITISH TRADE IN THE CENTRAL AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

Mr. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.): In the absence of the hon. Member for the Central Division of Sheffield, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what success has attended the official visit of Mr. Audley Gosling, Her Majesty's Minister in Guatemala, to Nicaragua, Honduras, Salvador, and Costa Rica; if Her Majesty's Consul at Managua has now been received; if Mr. Gosling obtained any information on hardware samples useful to British trade in the Republics to which he is accredited, and what has been done with these articles; and if Mr. Gosling has used his influence with the Guatemalan President to prevent the repudiation of the debt of his Government to England?

***The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): Owing to Mr. Gosling's long detention at Managua on matters connected with the question that had arisen in the Mosquito Reservation, the rainy season arrived before he could visit the other Republics to which he is accredited. Her Majesty's Government are not aware that any difficulty has arisen with regard to the reception of the Consular Officer at Managua. Samples of hardware and other goods have been received from Mr. Gosling, and were sent, on the 9th of May last, to the Associated Chambers of Commerce. Mr. Gosling, having standing instructions to protect British interests, will doubtless continue to use his best efforts unofficially on the subject of the debt.

VENTILATION AT ST. STEPHEN'S.

Mr. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether during the Recess it would be possible to have the windows in the Library and Dining Rooms so altered that they may be opened from the top instead of the bottom as at present, thus securing ventilation without the excessive amount of draught caused by the present arrangement?

***The FIRST COMMISSIONER of WORKS** (Mr. H. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I am afraid it is not possible, within the compass of an answer here, to give the detailed explanation entailed. Mr. Taylor, the surveyor in charge of the building, will be glad to meet my hon. Friend on the spot, and discuss the matter with him.

H.M.S. "BENBOW."

MR. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the negotiations for the sale of H.M.S. *Benbow*, one of the historical old frigates in our Navy, to a German firm at Stettin, for the purpose of being broken up, have fallen through; and whether the Admiralty will consider if it would be practicable to give this old frigate to the watermen, lightermen, and seamen on the Thames, as a resort and resting place for recreation and refreshment, and anchor it off Rotherhithe, where Admiral Benbow spent so many years of his life?

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, Lancashire, Clitheroe): The answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. As regards paragraph 2, the hon. Gentleman is evidently not aware that the *Benbow* is quite unfit for the purpose which his question suggests, though she is of considerable pecuniary value and will shortly be advertised for sale.

BOYCOTTING IN DUBLIN.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Thursday, 2nd August, Colonel O'Callaghan, of County Clare, who had brought up a number of sheep from Clare to Smithfield Market, Dublin, for sale, was followed about the market by a person named Malone from the neighbourhood of Bodyke, County Clare, who caused the sale of the sheep to be boycotted; whether Malone has already been bound over to the peace for threatening Colonel O'Callaghan; whether a constable of the Metropolitan Police to whom Colonel O'Callaghan applied was acting in accordance with the law in declining to interfere because no assault had been committed; and whether any steps will be taken to protect the rights of sellers in this and other markets when necessary?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. J. MORLEY, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The information supplied to me is not sufficient to enable me to reply to this question to-day, and I regret, therefore, to have to ask the hon. Gentleman to defer it until Monday next.

CONSTABULARY DUTY IN WEXFORD.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he inquire whether the 10 men in the two police huts on the Brook estate, County Wexford, pay 4s. 4d. per month for barrack accommodation, or £26 yearly, while the annual rent of the huts is only £2 10s.; what becomes of the surplus; are police in such stations compelled always to serve two years there; and, in view of the trying character of the night duty, would it be possible to shorten this term?

MR. J. MORLEY: It is a fact that the 10 men in the two police huts on the Brook estate pay 4s. 4d. per month for barrack accommodation, or £26 yearly, while the annual rent of the site of the huts is £2 10s. each. The huts in which the men are accommodated are regarded as police barracks, and were erected at public expense. The deduction of 4s. 4d. is made pursuant to Section 2 of the Constabulary and Police Act of 1883, and is applied in reduction of the amount voted under sub-head "Pay" of the Constabulary Vote. There is no rule of the nature indicated in the third paragraph; but having regard to the necessity for men of good local knowledge on the estate, it is considered that the men there should serve about two years, and for this reason it is not desirable to shorten the term.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will inquire whether Section 2 of the R. I. C. Barrack Regulations might be relaxed in peaceable districts?

MR. J. MORLEY: The section referred to requires the head constable or sergeant in charge of a station to make an immediate report of any man who absents himself from duty without permission, or from barracks, or from his lodgings at night. The Inspector General is of opinion that the Order is a very necessary one, and could not with advantage be relaxed.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the present intention of the Government respecting the R. I. C. Force Fund?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The Fund will continue to exist until all its obligations to the families of present members of the Fund (whether serving on pay or on pension) shall be fulfilled, and to that end the Fund and its actuarial concerns have been placed under the management of the National Debt Commissioners.

NEW ROAD IN COUNTY MAYO.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the late Government expended large sums of public money in having a road partly made between Aasleagh and Louisburgh, County Mayo, in the construction of which several bridges had to be erected; and that two miles of the road remain unfinished; whether he is aware of, and if not will he make inquiries as to, the general failure of the potato crop in the parishes of Ross, County Galway, and Killowen, County Mayo, through which this road runs; and will he, in view of the great distress that is certain to exist during the coming winter, have this useful work completed, as well as works of a similar character opened up through the West of Ireland?

Mr. J. MORLEY: The road referred to in the first paragraph is that between Aasleagh and Louisburgh, County Mayo, a portion of which remains unfinished. I am informed that arrangements are being made to obtain a county presentment for the improvement and completion of the road, and that the Congested Districts Board have agreed to contribute towards the cost of the completion of the work. With regard to the remainder of the question, I yesterday stated in reply to a question of the hon. Member for North Cork that the Local Government Board had instructed their Inspectors to keep them constantly informed as to the state of the poorer class. No Reports of the existence of distress amongst the people at present have reached the Board, and it will not be possible to form a reliable opinion as to the yield of the potato crop for some weeks to come.

ORDNANCE STORE DEPARTMENT, WOOLWICH.

Mr. KEIR-HARDIE (West Ham, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many of the workmen in the Ordnance Store Department, at the Royal Arsenal, Woolwich, are paid at the rate of 19s. 6d. per week; whether these men, since the introduction of the eight hour system, are compelled to observe the statutory holidays without pay; whether the officials connected with the Department are paid for these holidays; whether he will consider the advisability of either paying these men for the statutory holidays, or give them the opportunity which formerly existed of making good the lost time; and when the Government propose to give effect to the Resolution of the House, and pay these men a minimum of 24s. per week, which is the standard rate of wages for labourers in London?

*__The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the WAR OFFICE__ (Mr. Woodall, Hanley) (who replied) said: Six hundred and twelve labourers are employed in the Ordnance Store Department at Woolwich, at the weekly rating of 19s. 6d., to which the minimum has been increased from 17s. Since the adoption of the 48-hours week, the practice of working up certain holidays by overtime has been discontinued. But the *employés* of the Ordnance Store Department have five free holidays, and in most cases an additional seven days' leave with pay, so that they are enabled to draw their wages on the four statutory Bank holidays and to take three days' holiday besides. No deduction is made for holidays in the case of officials on fixed weekly or yearly rates. The improvement which has been made in the position of these workmen is, in the opinion of the Government, in effective accordance with the Resolution of the House of Commons to which the hon. Member refers.

THE WILSON TARIFF.

Major JONES (Carmarthen, &c.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of a considerable amount of uncertainty, he will ascertain through the Legation at Washington the date upon which the Wilson Tariff comes into effect; and whether he will instruct the Legation by cable to forward official copies of the Tariff to the proper Departments of Her Majesty's Government immediately?

*Sir E. GREY: Copies of the new Tariff will be sent directly they are obtained; we have telegraphed to ask as to the date upon which it may be expected to come into force.

BUNKER COALS.

Major JONES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will give instructions to the Bureau of Statistics to add to the yearly Returns of Minerals given in the Blue Book, under separate hearings, the bunker coals shipped "coastwise" and "oversea"?

*Mr. BRYCE: I do not know whether my hon. Friend by his expression "the yearly Return of Minerals" refers to the Mineral Statistics issued by the Home Office, or to the Annual Statement of Trade and Navigation issued by the Board of Trade. The amount of bunker coal shipped for the use of steamers engaged in the foreign trade has not been included in that Statement, because these shipments are not export in the ordinary sense of the term, but are like other ships' stores. Such shipments for use in the coasting trade would be still less of the nature of exports; but the hon. Member's suggestion will be referred to the Revising Committee, which meets in the autumn, to see if the present record in the Monthly Accounts of Trade of the quantity of coal shipped for the use of steamers in the foreign trade can properly be extended to coasting steamer coal.

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN INDIA.

Sir R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what result has attended the issue by the Government of India of the Resolution, No. 924 R.C., dated Simla, 15th September, 1893, in which terms are stated on which the Government of India are prepared to consider offers for the construction, by the agency of private Companies, of branch lines or extensions of existing railways, to be worked, when constructed, by the main line administrations, which it was intended should stimulate the construction of railways in India by private enterprise?

*The SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. H. H. Fowler, Wolverhampton, E.): Both the Government of India and the Secretary of State in Council are in negotiation for the formation of Companies for extending the Indian Railway system on the lines indicated in the Government of India's Resolution of the 15th September, 1893. I am in correspondence with the Government of India with reference to some modifications which are desired in the terms of that Resolution.

HOUSE OF COMMONS WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether, having regard to the fact that one set of water-closets off the Committee Room corridors is supplied directly from a cistern from which water is drawn for drinking and domestic purposes, he will state whether the main tank of the building from which the drinking water in the dining-rooms and bars is drawn supply directly any of the water-closets in other parts of the Houses of Parliament; and, if so, will steps be taken to provide a sufficient supply of water from the artesian well for drinking purposes?

*Mr. H. GLADSTONE: The main tanks from which the drinking water in the dining-rooms and bars is drawn are very large, containing in all about 36,000 gallons; and from one of the fire mains connected with these tanks two water-closets at a considerable distance obtain their supply. Practically, no mischief whatever can result from this; but a trifling alteration will be made in order to remove any objection. It would not be possible, except at great cost, to have supplies of water from two separate sources distributed throughout the building.

H.M.S. "NORTHAMPTON."

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state when effect will be given to the promise that the training ship *Northampton* will visit Stornoway at an early date?

Sir U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: I am not aware of any promise as to a visit to Stornoway by H.M.S. *Northampton.* Nor is such a visit included in her present cruise.

THE VICTORIA INCIDENT IN MASHONALAND.

Mr. BYLES (York, W.R., Shipley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Commissioner, Mr. Newton, appointed to inquire into the Victoria incident of July, 1893, in Mashonaland, has completed his inquiries, and when the Report will be laid upon the Table?

The UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): We have just received Mr. Newton's Report. I fear that there will not be time to print and circulate it, along with the other Papers relating to the matter, before the House rises. But I will lay the dummy at once, and the Blue Book will be issued and circulated as soon as possible.

CITY OF LONDON FISH TOLLS.

Sir A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that an alteration has recently been made by the Corporation of the City of London in respect of the market dues on fish; whether such dues, as now charged, are £1 (in lieu of £2) on fishing vessels arriving in the Port of London, and carrying upon an average 100 tons, while in the case of fish carried by land the dues are 2s. 6d. per van carrying three tons, which amounts to a preference in favour of sea-borne fish, and whether it is in accordance with the Act regulating the dues; and whether there is any remedy against such differential treatment of sea-borne fish as against fish carried to market by rail or otherwise?

*__Mr. BRYCE__: As I informed the House on the 27th day of July last, the Corporation of London have reduced their tolls on fish-laden vessels by one-half. The statutory provisions regarding the full tolls chargeable on the fish brought to Billingsgate Market by the different modes of conveyance will be found in the Schedule to the Act of 1846 relating to Billingsgate Market. The Board of Trade have no jurisdiction in regard to any reduction which may be made by the Corporation of the tolls contained in that Schedule.

THE STRABANE REGISTER.

Mr. T. M. HEALY had on the Paper the following question:—

> "To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if it is proved to the Local Government Board that Strabane Conservatives whose rates are not paid are unobjected to for the forthcoming Register, what notice will be taken by them of such conduct?"

When he rose to put it,

Mr. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) interrupted, by saying—Mr. Speaker: Is it in Order in a question put in this House to insinuate the possibility of a public officer being guilty of neglect of duty?

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is certainly hypothetical.

Mr. BARTLEY: Does it not impute an offence?

Mr. SPEAKER: I think it does.

[The question was not answered.]

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any decision has been arrived at regarding the amount of the military expenditure to be contributed by the Straits Settlements; and what is the cause of the delay?

Mr. S. BUXTON: I can only refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on the 13th instant.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON: This matter has been under consideration for three years. Cannot the hon. Gentleman promise an answer before the end of the Session?

Mr. S. BUXTON: I do not think I can give such a promise. I have more than once expressed my opinion as to the importance of bringing it to a conclusion, and I can only regret the delay in arriving at a decision.

INTERNATIONAL REPLY LETTER CARDS.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will consult with Foreign Postal Authorities with a view to introducing International reply letter cards upon a similar basis to the existing arrangement *re* reply post cards; whether he is aware that the French Postal Authorities have adopted and are about to introduce the reply letter card for inland purposes, and presumably for their colonies; and whether he is aware that the proposal in question is approved by several Foreign Postal Ministers, by a number of Chambers of Commerce at home, abroad, and in the colonies, as well as by Foreign Chambers of Commerce?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. A. MORLEY, Nottingham, E.): The question of introducing an International reply letter card was discussed at the Postal Union Congress held at Vienna in 1891, but was rejected on the ground that the difficulties connected with such a scheme were considered to be insuperable. The French Post Office some time ago appointed a Technical Committee to examine the question, and a promise was made that the result of their deliberations should be communicated to the British Post Office, but this has not yet been done. I am not aware how far Foreign Postal Ministers or Chambers of Commerce may be in favour of such a proposal; but having consulted the Chambers of Commerce in this country, I find that a considerable portion of them are of opinion that no real inconvenience is caused by the absence of facilities for prepaying replies to letters sent abroad, and that no action is necessary.

ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Parliamentary Charity Commissioner whether the attention of the Charity Commissioners has been called to a letter published in *The Globe* of the 25th July, signed M. Clementi, in which it is stated that the official surveyor to the Charity Commission reported that the full value of the estate on which St. Paul's School was erected was £32,000; that the Charity Commissioners authorised the purchase of the same at £41,000; that, on the 11th April, 1878, the owner and Assistant Charity Commissioner conveyed this land to a purchaser for £27,000; and that this purchaser on the next day conveyed the land to the Governors for £41,000; and what action the Commissioners intend to take in the matter?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. F. S. STEVENSON, Suffolk, Eye): The land which now forms the site of St. Paul's School was valued in 1877 at £32,000 by a surveyor nominated by the Charity Commissioners, who thereupon refused to sanction the proposal at that time made by the Governors of St. Paul's School for the purchase of the land at £46,000. The Governors, however, urged the purchase strongly upon the Commissioners, who eventually agreed to sanction the purchase at an accommodation price not exceeding £41,000, which was ultimately, and after much negotiation, accepted by the vendor. The Commissioners have reason to believe, though there is no official record of the fact, that one of their officers (not an Assistant Commissioner), who is now dead, was, shortly before the date of the purchase of the land by the Governors of St. Paul's School, the owner of or was the representative of the owners of the land in question; that he had agreed with the vendor who offered the land for sale to the Governors for its sale to him at a price of £27,000 or £28,000, but that this sale had not been completed by conveyance at the date of the agreement for sale between the vendor and the Governors; and that consequently the sale to the Governors was completed by the conveyance to them, by the direction of the vendor, of the legal estate which still remained in him, by the above-mentioned officer of the Commissioners, the effect of the transaction being that the said officer received a sum less by some £13,000 or £14,000 than that at which it was sold to the Governors. The officer in question was in no way officially engaged with the transaction, and it is believed that the Charity Commissioners of that day were not aware until after the completion of the agreement between the vendor and the Governors that the officer in question had any interest in the land sold.

THE EVICTED TENANTS BILL.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what course the Government intend to adopt in view of the rejection by the House of Lords of the Evicted Tenants Bill, the passing of which the Government have declared to be urgently required in the interest of social order in Ireland?

Mr. J. MORLEY: This Bill was introduced to meet certain social and administrative difficulties admitted in all quarters of the House in Ireland. The deplorable action of the House of Lords in rejecting that measure is not unlikely to aggravate those difficulties. In the presence of these difficulties it will undoubtedly be the duty, and it is the intention, of the Government again to deal with the subject next Session.

Mr. BARTON (Armagh, Mid): Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been drawn to certain speeches delivered in the course of the last few days by prominent Members of the House, in Ireland, forcibly directing the attention of the people against the new tenants now occupying evicted farms; and will he strengthen the police protection now afforded to these men?

Mr. J. MORLEY: No, Sir; I have been otherwise engaged with Irish affairs, and my attention has not been drawn to speeches made by Members of the House outside the House. Of course, the hon. and learned Member is well aware that we shall take every step to protect all the subjects of Her Majesty.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): Have the Government formed any intention of taking steps to prevent like action by the Lords with regard to the next Evicted Tenants Bill or any other Bill?

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, Mid): Will the Evicted Tenants Bill which the right hon. Gentleman has foreshadowed take precedence of the Welsh Disestablishment Bill next Session?

Mr. J. MORLEY: It is much too early to consider what will be done next Session. We will first dispose of this Session.

Mr. COBB: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my question.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Sir W. Harcourt, Derby): The hon. Member will perceive that it would be entirely premature to give an answer to his question.

THE SOUTH MEATH REGISTER.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with regard to the allegations as to the state of the South Meath Register of Electors, whether, in view of the imputations made being cleared up, he will direct an informal inquiry by the Revising Barrister, or some other gentleman, into the existence of the errors, discrepancies, and mistakes alleged, and order a Report to be made to him on the subject?

Mr. J. MORLEY: I quite agree that it is desirable that these matters should be cleared up, and that some account should be given of the discrepancies. Whether the method pointed out by my hon. and learned Friend is the one most convenient to adopt, I am not sure at this moment; but I will seriously consider it, and will certainly take that or some other method in order to meet my hon. Friend's views.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Lord Edmund Talbot, for the County of Sussex (South-Western or Chichester Division).

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Supply,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1894-5.

Class I.

1. £11,564, to complete the sum for Harbours in the United Kingdom and Lighthouses Abroad under the Board of Trade.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, he had to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the fact that there was a reduction on this Vote of £1,685, and he hoped that next year the reduction would be even larger. His contention was that Holyhead Harbour ought not to be maintained by the country. The Harbour existed for the benefit of the London and North Western Railway Company, and for the country to keep it up was simply to give that Company a subsidy. No doubt, *viâ* Holyhead was the nearest route to Ireland, but there was no reason why they should give the Railway Company £5,000 or £6,000 a year. There was another point worthy of notice. The harbourmaster was a retired commander of the Royal Navy, and drew a pension of £370 a year in addition to his salary of £800 annually. Surely it was not necessary that these appointments should be given to pensioners. Were there not many capable of filling the post who were not already provided with sinecures? Now that the Liberal Government were in power he hoped they would carry out further retrenchments. If the country were going to maintain harbours there were many places in Scotland and Ireland where money might be advantageously spent; but personally he did not think that this duty should be undertaken by the State. Holyhead Harbour, in his opinion, should be maintained by the London and North Western Company, and he therefore hoped that soon the payment of this subsidy would cease.

MR. T. M. HEALY said, that the London and North-Western Company wanted to spend £1,000,000 on Holyhead Harbour, but the late Tory Government refused them permission to do so.

MR. WEIR took exception to the item for the harbour-master at Holyhead. He thought it was very unfair that men who were in receipt of handsome pensions should be told off to fill such posts. He thought that the Government might vote more money for harbours, and that some of it should be expended in the North of Scotland. The Government seemed to him to spend money freely on what were not after all useful purposes and to refuse it where it was really needed. For instance, Portmahomack Harbour required to be put in order——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That does not arise on this Vote.

MR. WEIR said, he would content himself with a protest against the practice of conferring well-paid posts on men who were already in receipt of handsome pensions when there were many deserving men really needing employment.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) said, the point of the hon. Member for Caithness appeared to be that the advent of a Liberal Government ought to be signalised by a reduction of expenditure. With that he agreed, and the hon. Member would find that this Vote had been decreased by about £1,500. As to the salary of the harbour-master at Holyhead, he certainly did not think that it could be considered excessive. The position, it should be remembered, involved a great deal of responsibility, and to fill posts of this kind it would be difficult to find better qualified persons than gentlemen who had held commissions in Her Majesty's Navy. It would be false economy to exclude such persons from the Public Service. He could not agree with the view expressed by the hon. Member for Caithness as to the reason for the existence of Holyhead Harbour. Whether further retrenchment in respect of its maintenance could be effected would no doubt be considered when present contracts came to an end.

DR. CLARK: How long do the contracts run?

MR. BRYCE said, he would endeavour to find out and let the hon. Gentleman know.

* SIR A. ROLLIT said, he wanted to say a word on Sub-section B, in which was included the Vote for Spurn Head Works. He did not wish to lessen the number of workmen or delay the works, but he thought the nature of the works should be specified in detail, especially as he noted that there was some inconsistency in the figures. The total sum asked for was £600, and the details showed that it was supposed to include a groyne which would cost a sum of £700, while there was £75 set down for local superintendence. That made up £775, while, as he had said, the total amount to be voted was only £600. It would be very much better if the works were specified in detail.

MR. TOMLINSON asked for more information with regard to the maintenance and repairs of Blackwater Harbour.

COMMANDER BETHELL said, he had some very heavy artillery to bring to bear on the Treasury with regard to the east coast of Yorkshire. He would not, however, enter upon the matter now, but simply ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury to prepare himself for it next Session.

DR. CLARK said, he did not see why retired men with pensions should be taken for this work. If the man who did the work got £375 a year he ought to be content. He was doubtful of the necessity for spending money on the Bahama lighthouse. There was a tender which went out to the lighthouse which cost no less than £5,206 10s. 4d. a year. Either this lighthouse was used for our benefit or for the benefit of all the world, and he did not see any reason in the latter case why it should be kept up by this country alone. Very high salaries were paid in this instance, too, although the Treasury was very economical elsewhere. It was his belief that the whole British trade which was done was not equal to the cost of maintaining the lighthouse, and he hoped that the Treasury would effect some retrenchment in this respect next year.

Mr. BRYCE said, he was afraid the right hon. Gentleman had not listened with much attention to what he had said; otherwise he would not have attributed this amount to one lighthouse, seeing that it applied to all the lighthouses.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he had complained every year with regard to this Harbour Vote, and they always had the same excuse. He had no doubt that this harbour-master was a very excellent person, but while there were so many unemployed persons in this country he did not think they ought to give posts to men already in receipt of good pensions. Seeing the many claims that there were upon the Government these offices ought not to be given to pensioners so long as there was anybody else to fill them. It had never been put to them that this particular gentleman, the Inspector of the Bahamas, was better than any other man, and no doubt he received the appointment because he was the favourite of a Minister. He warned the Government—a Liberal and a Radical Government—that their supporters in the country, from whom they received both their places and their salaries, would not stand these sort of appointments much longer.

Sir A. ROLLIT asked for an answer to the point he had raised.

Mr. BRYCE said, he was not sure he understood what the point was.

Sir A. ROLLIT said, the point was that only £600 was to be granted this year, which appeared to include £700 for a new groyne and £25 for superintendence. He had no objection to make if such an economical feat could be performed.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, they ought to have some further information about this groyne.

*Mr. BRYCE said, it was intended to expend £700 for a new groyne, but the expense was not to be incurred this year.

Vote agreed to.

Dr. Clark

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £21,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1895, for constructing a new Harbour of Refuge at Peterhead."

*Mr. WEIR said, he should move to reduce this sum by £100 in order to call attention to the large amount of salaries paid on these works. He should like to hear what the engineer-in-chief, who received £800 a year, and the resident engineer, who received £750 a year, found to do. He considered that one man ought to be able to manage the work, and that one of these men ought to be cleared out, and the work managed by one competent man. The Government ought not to keep a lot of idle men about.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £21,700 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Weir.*)

*Mr. TOMLINSON said, some facts had been brought to his notice which showed that the local feeling upon this matter was that the money spent yearly on the works was not spent in the most judicious way. More care ought to be taken to see that it was. He thought it was understood that faster progress would be made. What money was voted ought to be expended on the portion of the works which it was most necessary should be advanced.

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. E. Robertson, Dundee) said, he thought there was a great deal of force in the demand that more money should be voted for this work. The amount asked for this year was the same as was asked for annually. With regard to the other point, he could not agree that the engineers did nothing.

Mr. WEIR said, it was for the hon. Gentleman to find out which of these two gentlemen had little or nothing to do. He might go down to Peterhead and find out.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON said, if that was all that was asked of him he would certainly promise to find out which of these two gentlemen had little or nothing to do.

Dr. CLARK thanked the hon. Gentleman for his answer, because he thought these works were being carried out in an unusually costly manner. More convict labour ought to be made use of upon the works. He was glad that something was to be done to the outward breakwater in order to render it serviceable. As to the expense on salaries, he did not think that a resident engineer at £750 a year and an assistant engineer at £250 a year was too much, but he did not see the necessity for a consulting engineer at £800 a year. The cost of construction and of superintendence seemed to him to be too much, and he urged that a more economical state of things should be brought by utilisation of convict labour.

MR. BUCHANAN said, the works ought to be carried on faster, especially the construction of the breakwater, so that there might be some return for the great expenditure of money and labour that had already been made upon the works.

MR. WEIR asked leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

3. Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £137,482, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1895, for Rates and Contributions in lieu of Rates, &c., in respect of Government Property, and for the Salaries and Expenses of the Rating of Government Property Departments."

MR. PICKERSGILL said, that on the occasion of the last Vote on Account, he put a similar Motion on the Paper to that which appeared now, but unfortunately he was not present when the Vote was called on. The statements made by the Secretary to the Treasury could not be regarded as satisfactory, and he desired for two minutes to refer to the subject, and make some reply to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman. In the first place, he wished to point out how extremely important this question was. It was not exclusively a Metropolitan question, but applied to all places where Government property was situated. So far as the Metropolis was concerned, there were some parishes in which the matter was of vital importance. Take the parish of St. George's. In regard to this parish, where the Government establishments occupied so large an area, the matter was of great interest. Now that the Equalisation of Rates Bill had been passed, it was more than ever necessary that there should be a fair valuation over the whole of London, and he sincerely regretted that owing to the opposition of some hon. Gentlemen opposite he was not able to proceed with the new Valuation Bill which he introduced to the House on behalf of the London County Council. It was, however, possible for the Secretary to the Treasury to make some approach to equality and equity as between the different districts in London, and he desired strongly to urge him to do what he could in the matter. The Government property in London fell naturally into two classes. One class was covered by Statute, for instance, the High Courts of Justice. It was provided in this case that rates to a certain amount should be paid—that was to say, the amount of rates which were payable over the site before the Courts of Justice were erected. It was obvious that such an arrangement was unjust, but it could not be altered except by Statute. With regard to the bulk of Government property in London the case was different, the rating being governed by a Parliamentary engagement. Ever since he had been a Member of that House, whenever this question had been raised, they had always been put off by successive Secretaries to the Treasury by statements that the Local Authorities were satisfied. He thought that statement might be explained in this way. The valuer for the Government was, no doubt, a good Government servant, and a very diplomatic gentleman, and some way or another Local Authorities were led to believe that unless they accepted at once the valuation which he put upon the property they would get nothing, and that it was a case of Hobson's choice. This, however, was not really so, because the payment of rates on Government property was not an act of grace, but a matter of right which could be claimed, and which rested upon as high authority as could be, short of an Act of Parliament itself. He proposed to examine for a moment the value of the explanation which the Secretary to the Treasury gave. In the first place, Somerset House was mentioned. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Government valuation of Somerset House was based upon the valuation of King's College which adjoined. The Government valuer put it at £12,000. The basis of the case for the new Valuation Bill was that it was not fair and just that the Local Authority should be allowed to place its own value on the property. The value placed on the site of Somerset House, irrespective of the buildings, by the valuer of the London County Council was £27,450. On the last occasion when this subject was before the House, the care and accuracy with which the valuations of the London County Council were made were touched upon by as high an authority as the hon. and learned Member for the Isle of Wight (Sir R. Webster). The next cases were those of the National Gallery and the British Museum. It was not contended by the Government that the valuations of these buildings fairly represented the values, but they craved in aid the Act of 1843, by which such institutions as Museums and Art Galleries were exempted from local rates. He could not help thinking that it was the intention of the Government to exempt those buildings on the engagement then given that Government property should bear its fair and equal share of the local burdens. The valuation of the Foreign Office was fixed at £11,500. The Government said the explanation of this was that it did not include the India Office. The valuation of the India Office was £2,900, and if the two valuations were added together an aggregate sum of £14,400 was obtained, whilst the valuation placed upon the sites alone of these buildings by the valuer of the London County Council was £32,580. It was admitted by the right hon. Gentleman that the Foreign Office valuation was fixed as long ago as 1878. Since then there had been no fewer than three quinquennial valuations, and, even assuming that the valuation of 1878 was a fair one, it was altogether out of date now. The last case cited was that of the Treasury buildings. It was stated that they had been valued by the Government at £8,500, and the right hon. Gentleman said that the gross valuation was something under £7,000. The valuer to the London County Council, however, put the site value alone at £15,386. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Local Authority concerned was satisfied with the valuation fixed by the Government valuer in this case, and he tried to establish this by quoting a letter 10 years old. A few days after the right hon. Gentleman's statement a signed letter appeared in *The Times*, stating that the Vestry had, two months before the right hon. Gentleman made that statement, requested their Finance Committee to approach the Government.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham) was understood to say that the Treasury had not been approached on the subject.

MR. PICKERSGILL said, that at all events the Vestry were not satisfied, and had requested their Finance Committee to approach the Government on the subject. It had been suggested that the Local Authorities themselves should be allowed to fix the values of the Government property in their areas. He should have no objection to that, but he thought the Government might reasonably object to the suggestion, as they would in that case be putting themselves entirely at the mercy of the Local Authority. A private person, if he were dissatisfied with the value fixed by the Assessment Authority, could always appeal to a Court of Law, but it would not be possible for a Government to appeal to a Court of Law, because these buildings were not rateable in law. He would suggest that the Government should consent to the appointment of a Committee on the subject. He had discussed the matter with a Committee of the London County Council, and that Committee took the view that the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry would fairly meet the exigencies of the case, provided that the London County Council was represented upon it. The question had become more urgent since the passing of the Equalisation of Rates Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £137,382 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, he was glad his hon. Friend had brought the matter again under the notice of the Committee. It was one of the most important practical questions in local administration that could possibly be raised. He believed that the figures with regard to Government property in the provinces were even more ridiculous as valuations than those affecting the Metropolis with which he had previously dealt on the Vote on Account. It would hardly be believed that the whole Customs property of the country was valued rateably at £4,300 a year. The Inland Revenue property, which was to a great extent composed of new buildings in large towns, was only valued at £5,300, or rather, that was the total amount of the rate paid. The whole of the Post Office property paid only £33,700, while the whole of the Law Courts, including the County Courts and the Metropolitan Police Courts, paid only £54,530. It was quite a mistake to suppose that the Local Authorities had acquiesced in the present valuations. He would take only one test instance of valuation—the case of King's College and Somerset House. He was a member of the Council of King's College, and therefore did not want to increase the rating of the building, and he was quite content to take King's College as the standard on which Somerset House ought to be valued. But it must be remembered that King's College had no frontage whatever except a gateway, whilst Somerset House had a very long frontage to the Strand and another to the approach to Waterloo Bridge. It also had a frontage to, with entrances from, the Embankment. These facts differentiated the position of Somerset House from that of King's College, but supposing that King's College was properly valued, the valuation of Somerset House ought to be 10 or 20 times as much as it was. Yet it was only about four times as much. He trusted that a definite and clear statement would be made by the Government to the effect that something would be done, in reference to this matter, which had become much more important in consequence of the passing of the Equalisation of Rates Bill. He was glad that the highest authority in another place had stated that that Bill did rough justice, as such a statement might be regarded as a tardy reparation to those on the Opposition side of the House of Commons who had taken an independent and a different view from their colleagues. He trusted that if the right hon. Gentleman was not able to say he would provide a remedy for the present state of things he would, at all events, assent to the appointment of an impartial Committee by whom the Government's own valuation would not be accepted as entirely authoritative.

MR. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough) said, he was glad to hear that some hon. Gentlemen were determined to take a Division. Ever since he had been in the House of Commons, and he did not know how long before, complaints had been made every year on this subject, and yet, although promises had been made by the Government, nothing had been done. He had had some experience himself in this work, and he knew what happened. He had no particular objection to a Committee so long as it was not a Departmental one. If they had a Committee at all, it should be a Committee of the House of Commons, on which the Local Authorities as well as the London County Council should be represented. He had always thought that so far as London was concerned they did not want an inquiry. In London, unlike the rest of the United Kingdom, a quinquennial valuation was held under different auspices to any other valuation in the United Kingdom, and at the meeting of Assessment Committees a Government officer was always present to see that the property of private individuals was properly assessed. He knew from experience that as a rule this officer valued Government property at about half its real value, and when he was appealed to for redress he replied, very often impudently, that the Government were not compelled to pay anything, and if his proposals were not accepted nothing at all would be paid. That was the only reply they got from the Government valuator or the police authority—although the police would come under another Vote. He knew as a fact that this valuator never listened to what they had to say, and he hoped that something would be done. There was a large amount of Government property in some parishes, and little or none in others, and the only way to arrive at a fair valuation was to value all on the same basis. Payment, however, was not an act of grace on the part of the Government, for it had been declared by Act of Parliament in 1874 that they should pay rates, and they ought to do so honestly. If there was no other way of getting out of this except by having a Committee, let them have a Parliamentary Committee that would be open to the public.

Mr. BARTLEY said, he agreed with what had been said by the hon. Gentleman opposite. He could show how obviously the valuation of Government property was below the mark. The gross amount taken for this service was something like 6s. in the £1. The sum taken this year was some £264,300, which would show that the absolute rateable value of the whole property belonging to the country in England, Scotland, and Wales was only £800,000. Of course, such an idea was absurd. If they looked through the Estimates they would see that £1,000,000 a year was spent on new buildings. For 100 years they had been spending this amount, in addition to all the land and property belonging to the Crown. To suppose that £800,000 covered the net value of this property was ridiculous. It was double or treble that amount, and some districts were affected very hardly indeed. It might come to pass that a large part of a district was taken up with public property, and though, in some respects, this might be an advantage from a ratepayers' point of view it was an enormous disadvantage. The Equalisation of Rates Bill made the matter worse than it was before. No doubt, it was only a question of paying money from one pocket into another; but, no doubt, it was only fair and honest on the part of the Government to the localities that they should pay proper rates on the buildings they chose to erect.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he must protest against the doctrine, which hon. Members appeared to favour, that the rest of the country ought to defray the local rates of London. A grant of some millions a year was made from Imperial sources in aid of local taxation, and this being the Metropolis of the three Kingdoms it had the advantage of having centred within it a large number of institutions which ought fairly to be distributed all through the rest of the Kingdom. They could not have it both in meal and in malt. They wished to have the advantage of these institutions, and what was paid for their upkeep, and then they wanted to have an advantage in the matter of rating. He protested against the doctrine. He objected to the system started by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, of making grants out of Imperial taxation in aid of local rates. He thought the system a most mischievous one, and all he could say to the Government was, that if they once entered on this plan it would involve much more than London. They in Ireland got very little indeed in respect of Government buildings.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, that Ireland got the largest share of the Vote.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he knew what she got. She got a composition in lieu of the actual amount of rates that should be her due. The Government did not pay their full share of the rates.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, that as this question was fully discussed on the Vote on Account, he did not propose to go into it again at any length. But he entirely dissented from what his hon. Friend had said as to these valuations not being allowed. He was prepared to assert that the gentleman who was accustomed to value Government property was quite as competent to value property as the valuer of the London County Council. The valuer of the London County Council set up his valuations in contradistinction to those of the Government valuer, but he did not know whether the valuer of the London County Council understood the principle on which public buildings were to be valued. The Government valuer did not adopt the course suggested by the hon. Member for Peterborough. The hon. Gentleman said the Government valuer went to the Local Authority and said, "Here is Hobson's choice; take it or not." [Mr. A. C. Morton: That is so.] Surely the Government valuer was a gentleman who could be trusted to speak the truth in a matter of this kind, and he reported that he had in every case furnished the Rating Committee with his proposed valuation, and then in person discussed his proposal with the Committee, carrying on his negotiations until a satisfactory arrangement was arrived at. That was not Hobson's choice. He had many letters from Rating Authorities in various parts of the Metropolis showing that they were satisfied with the valuations.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): Will you give the date and the authority?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the committee in Kensington were well satisfied with the valuation. The City of London also expressed their general satisfaction with the state of things, but that was not a new case.

MR. A. C. MORTON: They do not in my parish—St. Dunstan's-in-the West.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, he had the valuation of 1891 before him, and he saw that in St. Martin-in-the-Fields, St. Mary-le-Strand, St. Clement Danes, Westminster, and other parishes the rating was accepted by the committees as fair and reasonable. He could go through a great number of others.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, that the letters were not from the Overseers.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the letters were from the proper authorities. The Overseers were not the Assessing Authorities; the Assessing Authorities were the Assessment Committees of the Unions.

MR. A. C. MORTON: My right hon. Friend will excuse me——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must request the hon. Member for Peterborough not to interrupt.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, the Secretary to the Treasury was prepared to allow him to make an explanation. He had been an Overseer for a number of years, and asserted it was the Overseers who made the assessments; the Assessment Committees only revised the assessments.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the principle of the valuation of these Government properties was one that ought to be considered. They could not value Government property like the India Office or Somerset House, as they would value a shop or warehouse. They had to take into account all the circumstances of the case, and value the property according to what it would be likely to let for if it were put in the market to be rented. When, however, there was a small valuation of Government property he was quite prepared to bring in a Bill to place the property in the position of other property. He thought that was a fair offer. [MR. T. M. HEALY: Will it apply to the three countries?] Certainly. Since the 30th July, when this question was before the House, not a single representation had been made by a parish or Union in respect to assessments. The Treasury were ready to consider any representation that any Rating Authority might wish to make with a view to a revision of a valuation of any Government property. They were ready to listen to any representation made by the County Council, but they could not deal with the County Council; they could only deal with the Rating Authorities. As to the proposal that a Committee should be appointed, he would confer with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He quite admitted that the Equalisation of Rates Bill had made this a more important question than it was before.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) said, he would like to point out to his right hon. Friend that most of the Local Authorities were in recess at the present time, and it was impossible for them to have communicated with the right hon. Gentleman between the last time this question was brought before the House on the Vote on Account and now. They must, therefore, wait until they met again. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Government were prepared to reconsider the whole question of assessments. Next year they would have the quinquennial assessment in London, and all the Local Authorities desired was that Government property in any of the parishes should be assessed on the same basis as property in the occupation of private individuals was assessed, and that could be effected without an Act of Parliament. He contended that every building, whether Government property or otherwise, ought to pay according to its proper assessment.

MR. T. M. HEALY: What would you put on the House of Commons?

MR. J. ROWLANDS said, he did not know. He was not the authority. He was prepared to put on what was necessary. He objected to any property being exempted from rating; he objected to the whole principle of exemption. Every building ought to pay according to assessment, however it was occupied. He was quite satisfied with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he did not like to intervene in this family quarrel between the supporters of the Government and the Government themselves. He thought, however, the difficulty would be much better met by a Committee—either Departmental or a Committee of this House—to consider the whole question of the rates of the Metropolis, and to endeavour to establish a uniform system of rating throughout the Metropolis. Reference had been made to Somerset House, and to the large frontage which it had, and to the small amount of contribution it gave to the taxation of the Strand. *Primâ facie*, that would appear unfair; but he gathered from the observations of the right hon. Gentleman who brought in the Equalisation of Rates Bill that they were not to consider the question of frontage, but of night population. He asked, how many people lived in Somerset House in the evening? That argument, he held, fell to the ground. He contended that the question was a broad one, and, as he had said, they should have a uniform system of assessment for the whole of London, and not only for Government property.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland) said, he really must object to the omnivorous cry of London. On every topic now they had the London Members getting up and urging on the Government that London should get something more. He did not forget this fact: that if London got more the rest of the country got less. He would willingly admit that London got, on the whole, too little on some Government assessments, but he would set off against that that the whole expense of the Royal Parks was borne by the public at large. Nobody could say that those parks existed mainly for the benefit of the country; they existed mainly for the good of London. If he were in his right hon. Friend's place he would make a rough-and-ready sum. Speaking of the cities, as a rule where Government property was situated, he had never heard any complaint at all that Government property was not, upon the whole, fairly assessed.

*Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said, that every member of the London County Council, both Moderate and Progressive, had the highest opinion of the ability of the London County Council valuer. The hon. Member was understood to ask a question respecting the salary of the Government valuer.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, the present holder of the office was a very valuable officer. He received his present salary on the condition that his successor would not ask for the same amount.

Mr. WEIR: What is the salary?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: The salary will be fixed when the next appointment is made.

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he was sorry his right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury had not seen his way to make some more definite proposal. It had been suggested in the House that the contribution London received from the probate and other duties was considerably smaller than it ought to be, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised a Committee to inquire into that matter. He would suggest that that Committee might be empowered to inquire into the cognate subject of the valuation of Government property.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) said, he hoped the Committee would be appointed, and that the Reference would be a wide one, including not only the question of the rating of property, but the cost of the property over London. He thought that either a Departmental Committee or a Committee of the House ought to be appointed to thresh this matter out.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, he should be glad to consider the proposal of his hon. Friend the hon. Member for Shoreditch. He now appealed to the Committee to allow the Vote to be taken.

Mr. A. C. MORTON should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman meant by allowing the authorities to appeal to the Treasury? Would that be an appeal to some party other than the valuer? Because an appeal to him was no good whatever. Again, it was utterly impossible to suppose that one man could value these properties all over the United Kingdom. He would have no local knowledge which it was requisite he should have in such matters. He should like to point out that London did pay a larger share of Income Tax and House Duty than any other part of the United Kingdom, because it was the only part that was properly assessed.

Mr. PICKERSGILL: Relying on the promise of the right hon. Gentleman, I propose to withdraw my Amendment.

Dr. CLARK said, he saw that the rates payable in Scotland this year had increased by the terrible leap of 50 per cent., having risen from £10,800 to £16,500. How had that great change occurred?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT replied that additional properties had come into rating which had not been rated before. He was unable at present to give details of the properties.

Dr. CLARK asked how far the Government were carrying out the suggestion which he made some few years ago, and which it was then stated should be considered? They paid a large sum in respect to charges on buildings used in this country by Ambassadors and Legations from abroad. He strongly objected to giving such privileges unless there was reciprocity in the same matter on the part of other countries.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT was understood to say that the charge on this head was decreasing from year to year, and the Government were proceeding as far as possible in the direction indicated by the hon. Member.

Mr. HOZIER (Lanarkshire, S.) expressed the hope that on the Report stage the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give particulars of the increase in rating with regard to Scotland.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I will inquire into the details.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

4. £109,149, to complete the sum for Public Works and Buildings, Ireland.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he wanted to draw attention to certain matters affecting the Phœnix Park, Dublin. As he understood, in that Park certain rights had been granted in the case of certain clubs, and the result had been that a good deal of jealousy was excited, inasmuch as the Government had not undertaken to lay out a proper part of the Park for games for the general body of the working people. Up to the present it was only the favoured classes who had these privileges or rights conferred on them. He had frequently protested against the way in which every Government had allowed facilities for the erection of buildings to be put up in the Park for the accommodation of the favoured classes. In the year 1886 he got an undertaking from the then Secretary to the Treasury that no further permanent buildings would be allowed to be put up for the purpose of certain games. In spite of that, in the case of the Polo Club the Government had allowed a certain portion of the Park to be concreted and a stand-house put up for the purposes of carrying on the game of polo. This had gone so far that the public when they went on the ground were regarded as trespassers. Everyone did not play polo, and, while he had no objection to the game, he thought it was going entirely too far to allow permanent buildings to be erected in this way on Government property. As so much had been done for the privileged classes, he thought something ought also to be done for the general body of the people. In Parks in England swings, &c., were erected for the convenience of children, and places set apart where they could play their games, and he would suggest that a portion of the Phœnix Park should be set apart for the benefit of the children of the working classes, to have games and swings, &c., suitable for them. He had frequently protested against cattle being allowed to graze in the Park, and had urged that only sheep and deer, which were an ornament to the Park, should be allowed to graze there. The result of allowing cattle there some years ago was that they had to pay several hundred pounds for the slaughter of the cattle because they had pleuro-pneumonia, and a pledge was afterwards given by the Conservative Government that cattle grazing in the Park would be restricted to a considerable extent. Instead of that being done, he was now told that the Government intended to again make contracts for cattle grazing in the Park, but he hoped they would not do so. As to cycling, he understood it was intended to put a stop to cycling races in the Park. Some people had a prejudice against cycling, but he did not think cycle races had been found to be an inconvenience. The general body of the public attended them; and if the police found bookmakers and other offensive persons along the roads, the way to deal with the matter was to arrest the bookmakers. The Association which organised these races had stringent rules against betting and gambling, and it was their fault if the bookmakers came there. He thought those sports should be allowed to continue. He did not believe the Government had the legal power to put down this cycling racing in the Park. He himself had resisted several attempts at further stringency in the matter, and he had killed two Bills introduced by the late Government to give further power to the Board of Works. He also wished to refer to the rule preventing market gardeners going through the Park before 10 o'clock in the morning with their flowers, fruits, vegetables, &c. Those people lived along the valley of the Liffey towards Lucan, and it was of great convenience to them that they should be allowed to make a short cut through the Park before 10 o'clock in the morning. The only other route was by the public road on which there was an enormous hill, and he need not point out the injury that would be done to the flowers, &c., by being jolted over a hilly and uneven road. The Government for some reason had put a stop to that traffic through the Park. It was unfair to those people who had those rights for 100 years; and, further, he would point out that while the market gardeners were prevented from using the Park in the way he had mentioned, Lord Iveagh and other local aristocrats were allowed to have their horses and carts going through the Park to any extent, sometimes carrying coals. He did not object to these gentlemen having these advantages, but he strongly protested against any attempt being made to restrict the privileges or rights of the market gardeners. If it was complained that they caused the road to get out of repair, he thought there would be no objection to voting a certain amount of money for the purpose of keeping it in proper condition. With regard to the erection and repair of piers, he understood that the money for such purposes was now practically exhausted; but he got a Return some time ago in connection with a proposed pier at Whitehouse, County Louth, which showed that, under certain circumstances where loans had been paid, there still might be a certain amount available for the building of piers, and he hoped the Government would approach the Board of Works and see whether money could not be found to enable piers of this character, the construction of which had been recommended by the Fishery Inspectors, to be made. In conclusion, he suggested that the Bull Wall, in the neighbourhood of Clontarf, should be asphalted or concreted on top, so that it might be turned practically into a promenade. It would only cost a few hundred pounds to do so, and he hoped the Government would see that the work was done. Such works were never left uncompleted in England and Scotland, and they ought not to be in Ireland. Some contribution might be obtained from the Clontarf Town Commissioners in connection with the matter, as it would add greatly to the amenities and facilities of the township, and he suggested that the Government should ascertain how much it would cost.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman for some information about the Green Street Court House. Some years ago it was resolved to have a new Court House, and an arrangement was come to between the Grand Jury of County Dublin, the Dublin Corporation, and the Government for the erection of the necessary building. That arrangement fell through because of some claim made by the Corporation which the Government declined to assent to. The Judges had refused to sit in the Court House because of its insanitary condition, and now some arrangements had been made to patch the Court House up. He raised a question last year, when £3,000 were voted as the contribution of the Government towards patching it up, and now this year there appeared another charge of £1,000, and there was no statement in the Estimates as to the probable amount that would be required. This money would be simply lost, as the expenditure so far had been lost, it being quite impossible to make the old Court House into a building at all fit for the administration of justice. What has occurred since last year? The workmen in making some excavations came upon a large number of human skeletons, and it was then discovered that the Court House was on the site of the old Churchyard of Mary's Abbey. Whether that accounted for the unhealthy condition of which everybody who used the Court House had to complain, he did not know; but the fact remained that the Court House was originally built upon a churchyard. What was the use of going on spending public money upon a building that was absolutely certain to be useless? They could not make it suitable as a place for the administration of justice, and he did not see, when the Government, the Grand Jury, and Corporation had almost come to terms some years ago, before this expenditure was incurred, why they should not be able to come to terms again. It was certain that a new Court House would have to be built, for it was not fair to ask the Judges and professional men and litigants to spend their time in a Court House which was in such an unsanitary condition as Green Street Court House, and which always must be so from the nature of its site.

MR. BARTLEY observed that the hon. and learned Member for Louth strongly objected to the rates on the public property in London being paid out of the Imperial Exchequer, although these properties concerned the interests of the whole country and were located in certain parts of London. But the hon. and learned Member now, when it was a question which concerned the Dublin ratepayers, wished that the whole country should step in and provide the Dublin people with cricket fields, swings, and so on——

MR. T. M. HEALY: Give us a Parliament of our own, and we will do it ourselves.

MR. BARTLEY: You want us to give you the money with which to pay for it.

MR. T. M. HEALY: We do not.

MR. BARTLEY said, it was rather a strong order to ask that they should assist to provide Dublin with these things, considering that they had to pay thousands out of their rates. Again, with regard to the roads in Phœnix Park which were used by the market gardeners, the hon. and learned Member said he should not object to voting a few more pounds in order to put the road in a proper state of repair. He (Mr. Bartley), as a Londoner, objected to having to pay to put the roads in order which should be paid for by the Dublin people, in the same way as the roads in the London parks were paid for by the London ratepayers. As to the hon. Member's request that money should be spent on the asphalting of the Bull Wall at Clontarf, as that was a matter which would improve the property in the neighbourhood, it ought to be done by the Dublin people, and not at the public expense.

*SIR A. ROLLIT said, he should like to support the observations of the hon. Member for Louth in regard to the importance of providing piers in Ireland. On this subject the Sea Fisheries Select Committee came to the conclusion in their Report that the small amount available for this purpose in England, Scotland, and Ireland was very much to be regretted. No one could doubt the value of these grants, and how much they contributed to the improvement of the various districts. Baltimore, in County Cork, had been transformed by such means, socially and commercially, into a wholly different district. If there was one thing more than another to which they lay under a deep obligation to the Leader of the Opposition, it was for the industrial development of Ireland. His policy, which had been happily followed by his successor, was one which was economical and sound from every point of view, and of a most valuable character. He urged that the light railways in Ireland should be continued downwards to the water and made available for the carriage of fish to the market and manure to the land, the necessity for this being especially urgent in the case of the Skibbereen and Baltimore Light Railway.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT, referring to the observations of the hon. and learned Member for North Louth, said, that hon. Gentleman had, in a moderate manner, raised several subjects worthy of consideration. With regard to the cricket and other clubs in the Phœnix Park, he quite agreed that the stations set apart were not altogether satisfactory, but it was hoped that in another year they would be very much improved. He quite agreed that when accommodation was arranged for the clubs there should also be liberal provision made for the public, and he thought that had been done. With respect to the permanent building the hon. Member referred to, he believed it was only a very small structure. He did not think they ought to deal in a narrow spirit with respect to the facilities given to the clubs, but at the same time the Government would take care that these buildings should not become so numerous or so large as to be objectionable. With regard to the use of the parks by children, he did not agree with the hon. Member for North Islington. He did not see why children should not enjoy the park like grown-up people. They did a great deal out of the taxes for the public parks in London. They did not do it for all the parks, because the London County Council managed a considerable number.

MR. BARTLEY said, the expense in that case came out of the rates, and to that he did not object.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that a great deal was done out of public money for Hyde Park, St. James's Park, the Green Park, Kew Gardens, and other parks, and he did not think they ought to be at all narrow in voting money for the Phœnix Park. He did not see why children should not enjoy the park like grown-up people.

MR. BARTLEY: I did not suggest that they should not.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that Phœnix Park had been managed as a public park; and anything that could be done to make it more useful and enjoyable to all classes was worthy of consideration. It was true the presence of cattle in the park had been found to be a nuisance. Sheep were to be introduced in the place of cattle, and the ugly buildings used for the latter were to be removed further away from sight. Cycling was still to be allowed; but cycle racing was to be prohibited, as it had been found dangerous to the public.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Has anybody been hurt?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the information he had received was that the racing was likely to be dangerous to the public, and there was also the question of the bookmakers who attended the races. As to the cart traffic through the Park, pressure had been put upon the Local Authority outside to keep their road in thorough repair, as it was owing to the bad state of that road that the Park road was used. It was hoped that the representations made would be successful.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Abolish the Grand Jury system, and we will put the roads in repair.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that in reference to piers, he had to say that there was no money available for additional works. It might become a question whether money should not be found for carrying out new work, but that was a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to decide. With respect to the question the hon. Member had raised with regard to Clontarf, he was bound to say that it was deserving of consideration. The improvement would not involve a very great expenditure, and he promised to bring the matter under the notice of the Board of Works. He agreed with the hon. Member for South Tyrone that a good deal was to be said with regard to the condition of the Green Street Court House; but the sum in question now was simply a re-Vote. The work was in charge of the Corporation, and the grant in aid would not be paid until the work was completed. The Corporation had been urged to push on with it without unnecessary delay.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that some years ago £8,000 was voted annually for Pier Works in Ireland. That Vote had been abolished, the expenses being put on the Church Fund. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol when Chief Secretary held out hopes that the money would be re-granted. If it were re-granted all the difficulties of the Secretary to the Treasury would vanish. He wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his defence of the expenditure on the Phœnix Park. He desired to point out that the Suck was in process of drainage, and had, as a matter of fact, been pretty well drained. He thought, however, that Her Majesty's Government should consider the important question of the drainage of the tributaries of the Suck. Before the drainage of the Suck was fairly finished, he urged that the Government ought to give consideration to the question of the drainage of tributaries of the Suck, and of the various districts in Ireland which were in need of drainage. The way to facilitate the drainage of the Suck and other districts would be to send down an officer of the Board of Works to the district which was in need of drainage to map out the area affected, to advise the people to form Boards, and then to get the people to go to work and get the Government to help them. The way in which the Government could help them would be to supply some of the money and the people to raise the rest. He gave, as an example of a suitable district for operations of this kind the district of Dunmore, in the County Galway, and he very strongly urged that drainage works should be inaugurated in this district. The Secretary to the Treasury had by means of drainage a unique chance of improving the country. Ireland required draining, and the neighbourhood of the Suck especially would be much improved by drainage, and works might very advantageously be undertaken in connection with the Lower Bann. But the Suck had been picked out as one of the best works in the whole of Ireland. Mr. Cowen once said that the first thing to be done in Ireland was to dry it. If the Secretary to the Treasury would dry Ireland he would confer as great a boon on the country as any system of politics whatsoever could. He hoped the Government would give their attention to the matter.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, the hon. and gallant Gentleman had given him a larger work to do than he had ever been asked to do before. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had asked him to drain the whole of Ireland. If he undertook to do that, he thought he would soon drain the pockets of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom as well. He did not think the hon. and gallant Gentleman's proposal was really practicable.

Colonel NOLAN said, he had spoken more particularly of the Suck and Shannon.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, that many works of that kind had been carried out in Ireland.

Mr. STOREY (Sunderland): Which of them has been successful?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: The drainage of the Suck, I believe, has been successful.

Mr. STOREY: I believe it has been most unsuccessful.

Colonel NOLAN: It is not yet completed, but it is a success.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, the Government were not prepared to undertake to drain the tributaries of the Suck. They had passed a Bill not only through this House, but the other House of Parliament, which gave increased powers for borrowing money for the Suck drainage. The Government would be glad to facilitate drainage if it did not cost a large amount.

Colonel NOLAN said, this was a very important subject. He had not liked the whole of the speech of the Secretary to the Treasury, though one portion of it was nice. The nicest part was where the right hon. Gentleman said that if it did not cost too large a sum of money he would do what he could to facilitate drainage works in Ireland. He hoped that during the Recess the right hon. Gentleman would deal with the matter. A large sum would not be required. The hon. Member for Sunderland was quite wrong in the statement he had made. These drainage schemes had all proved successful, except when it was attempted to confine drainage with navigation. It was premature to speak about the success of the operations on the Suck, as the work was not completed; but there were many works of arterial drainage, such as that at Tuam, and which were successful, or nearly so. He hoped that in the coming winter the Government would bestir themselves, and see where drainage works could be carried out, and advise the population as to the steps to be taken.

Mr. BARTON (Armagh, Mid.) said, he noticed that the sum for Constabulary huts, which was £850 last year, was this year £863. He could have wished that the Estimate had been larger for the year, because the item was one on which, perhaps, it might be necessary to have a little larger expenditure. He did not desire to embarrass the Chief Secretary, but the matter was most important. There had been threats and menaces thrown out within the past few days to the effect that the men who were holding evicted farms would not be comfortable in their houses. There were two forms of giving police protection —by patrolling, and the construction of police huts near lonely farms. If the position should become more dangerous he hoped the Chief Secretary would not hesitate to incur necessary expense in increasing the number of police huts. These huts were very efficacious in warding off danger, much more so than patrolling. He assumed that the right hon. Gentleman would not fail in any way in affording adequate protection to persons who might be in danger.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. J. Morley, Newcastle-upon-Tyne): The hon. and learned

Gentleman need hardly, I think, have called my attention to the possible risks arising during the coming winter. I called attention to those risks the other day in my speech on the Tenants Bill, and if those apprehensions are realised it is possible they will lie very heavily upon some of the friends of the hon. and learned Member. However all that may be, he does me no more than justice when he assumes that I will do my best to preserve law and order in Ireland in every particular. The question of providing police huts in particular districts is entirely a question of detail in police administration. Of course, whatever the number of huts required, they will be provided, and we will not scruple to expend whatever money is necessary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR submitted that it was not in Order to discuss questions of policy on a particular Vote.

The CHAIRMAN said that was so.

Dr. CLARK said, Ireland had always been the spoilt child of the Treasury, and for the simple reason that Irishmen always fought for what they wanted, and they found the Treasury to be very squeezable, although that was not their experience in the case of Scotchmen. He did not so much regret this, however, for Ireland was terribly overtaxed; there was an enormous amount of poverty in the country, and it was a melancholy fact that the result of two years of Liberal Government had been to add to the terrible burden upon Ireland. Scotland suffered, but not so greatly. There were, for example, a large number of grants to various Learned Societies in England and Ireland, whereas in Scotland similar Societies got practically nothing at all. Against this he wished to protest; and although Scotch Members were economists, he for the future meant to go in for a policy not of economy, but of extravagance, in order that Scotland might get her due, and might also have given her grants for the Royal Society of Edinburgh and for her other Learned Societies. He would not on that occasion move a reduction of the Vote, but he hoped that before another year some understanding would be come to by which Scotland would be more fairly treated in these matters.

Vote agreed to.

Mr. J. Morley

5. £32,778, to complete the sum for Railways, Ireland.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked for a statement from the Secretary to the Treasury as to the progress made with light railways in Ireland. In what position did they stand?

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, the Glenorlan railway, 24 miles in length, was nearly finished, and should be opened in September or October this year. As to the Collooney line, the total length of which was 47¾ miles, the first contract had to be rescinded, and that of necessity caused some delay in the completion of the undertaking. As a matter of fact, the period allowed for making the line had had to be extended. The Galway and Clifden line, 49¼ miles in length, should be completed by October or November, 1894. Other lines had been completed, and he might inform the Committee that, having visited last Whitsuntide, and also during Whitsuntide of last year, nearly all these railways, he was able to testify that they would be very beneficial to many districts of the country which at present it was difficult to approach except by carts over a common highway. He was told at one place, where the railway goes down to the sea, that there were tons of fish sent every day over the line, this being previously impossible on account of the distance and inaccessibility of the markets.

Sir A. ROLLIT asked if it was intended to continue the extension of the Skibbereen Railway?

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I am not aware of such an intention.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said, he thought the statement of the Secretary to the Treasury quite satisfactory, but he urged that the opening of certain of the lines should be pushed forward with a view to the accommodation of the army of harvesters when they returned from England and Scotland. They could not forget the tragic disaster that lately occurred at Achill, and he hoped the works in hand would be so far advanced as to render any repetition of it unlikely.

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, he hoped that a temporary station would be put up at Achill as early as possible.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he did not blame the Government for not rushing through these railways. They might give work to the peasantry for three or four winters to come. But he did not quite understand what the right hon. Gentleman said as to the line between Claremorris and Collooney. When was it to be opened? He was aware that considerable difficulties had arisen in connection with the financing of the undertaking. He further would like to hear something about the Galway and Clifden Railway. Everyone was anxious that that line should be opened as soon as possible, as the fishing industry on the West Coast would benefit very greatly by it. Finally, as so much was done in this direction by the late Government, he would like to see the Liberal Government giving them two or three more light railways.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, pressure was as far as possible brought to bear upon the contractors to expedite the works. With regard to the grants made by the late Government and the suggestion that the present Government should increase them, he was happy to state that Ireland generally was in a much better condition than formerly, and he thought they might look forward to a good winter.

COLONEL NOLAN: When will the Collooney Railway be opened?

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Probably in October, 1895.

MR. FOLEY (Galway, Connemara) said, he did not know whether the ordinary course was taken in this case in entering into the contract, because as a rule it was usual to impose conditions both as to time and circumstances. It appeared to him, however, that the late Government had in this case given the Midland and Great Western Railway of Ireland the greatest possible latitude, and the result was that instead of the undertaking being completed in accordance with the contract the time was exceeded by something like 12 months. He hoped that the Government would not allow this to go on, and would guard itself against a repetition of the offence by giving contracts to people who were fully competent to undertake and complete them. Even now the Government should insist upon the Company carrying out this agreement without any further delay.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that the Order in Council fixed December, 1894, for the completion of the Galway and Clifden line, and it was not anticipated that the time allowed would be exceeded.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.) said, he should like to put in a claim on behalf of Wales. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway had suggested that the Liberal Government should undertake to make two or three fresh light railways in Ireland, but surely it was about time that other parts of the United Kingdom came in for some consideration in these matters. To the railways themselves he had no objection to make, except perhaps that the amount voted for them was inadequate; but, still, he found that altogether a sum of about £1,000,000 sterling had been spent on 24 or 25 railways in the agricultural districts of Ireland, and he would suggest that it was time the Government undertook the construction of similar works in Wales.

THE CHAIRMAN: That question does not arise on the Vote, which is confined to light railways in Ireland.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said, he had of course no wish to infringe the ruling of the Chair, but he would like to remark that the Secretary to the Treasury spoke in glowing terms of the beneficial effect of these railways on the industries of Ireland, and he ventured to think equal benefit might be reaped from similar undertakings in Wales and other parts of the United Kingdom.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire) said, these light railways had now been in operation a long time, and he would like to have some details as to their working. Were they constructed on the standard Irish gauge or on the narrow gauge?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Most of the lines are on the standard (broad) gauge, but others are narrow gauge.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN asked, further, whether the companies working the lines used their own rolling stock, or was special stock built for these lines? The question of light railways was about to be considered by an International Railway Congress, and he would ask whether a Return giving details of the construction of the Irish light railways, and of the revenue earned by them, could be presented?

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT promised to inquire as to where the information could be found.

Mr. WEIR said, he was glad to hear that the light railways were proving a great success in Ireland. Perhaps they might hope to have them provided for Wales and Scotland as well?

The CHAIRMAN: I have distinctly ruled such remarks to be out of Order.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he did not at all object to voting money for Irish light railways, but he must say the time had arrived when they should tell the Government that similar railways were required in other parts of the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is the third time I have ruled such remarks out of Order.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he was only going to give reasons for opposing the Motion. A great deal of money had been wasted on these undertakings, and he wished to call the attention of the Government to the necessity of preventing such waste. By all means let them have railways which would be useful and beneficial to the people, but do not let them job the money away on contractors and other people. He was sorry they were not allowed to discuss the necessity for railways in other parts.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I distinctly ruled that out of Order.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, that on the point of Order he wished to call attention to the fact that whilst Members could not move to increase the Vote they could move to decrease it on the ground that they could not get money in any other way. He was sorry for the Chairman's ruling, because it prevented them discussing this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not entitled to say that.

Vote agreed to.

Class II.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £22,595, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Officers of the House of Lords."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said, the Government had gratefully acknowledged the action of the House of Commons in reducing the Vote for the House of Lords last year by the sum of £500. This was a little testimonial to the vigilance of the Representatives of the taxpayers upon which they had a right to congratulate themselves. There appeared to him to be no reason why they should not go a little further in the same direction. He did not see why, after the House of Lords had been able to act in the splendid and efficient manner in which they had acted in the last few days, even after a reduction of £500, there should not be a further reduction, as it might help them still further along. A good many people besides himself found it a very trying thing to have to vote a large sum for the House of Lords. He would suggest to the Government that as the House of Lords had managed to get along very well after the reduction of last year there should be a further reduction this year, and he would move, therefore, to reduce the Vote of £41,595 by £40,000.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out that the sum now asked for is only £22,595.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Then I move to reduce the Vote by £20,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £2,595, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: I must appeal to my hon. and learned Friend, having made his statement, not to press his Amendment. Since the Vote of the House of Commons last year, reducing the Lords' Estimate by £500, we may say that the House of Commons has achieved a victory, for the Treasury has not allowed the Estimate of the present year to exceed the amount allowed by the House last year. As we refused to comply with any increase in the Estimates passed last year, a conference took place between the Lords and the Treasury, and the House of Lords met us in a most liberal spirit. [*A laugh.*] Well, I speak of a liberal spirit from a financial point of view. They have agreed to meet the suggestions of the Treasury, and place their staff of clerks exactly on the same basis as the staff of clerks in the House of Commons. This is great progress, because, after all, though the House of Lords may not have as long hours as we have, they have a very much smaller number of clerks to do the necessary work of the House. But this is not all. A Committee of the Lords, which sat in 1889, made recommendations which are being carried out at the present moment, and which will eventually lead to a saving of £6,500 on the Vote. Already £2,104 of that amount has been saved, but, of course, the full reductions can only be carried out when the members of the existing staff retire. We cannot ask the House of Lords to break faith with any gentleman who holds the position of clerk or any other position in that House. I mention this to show that the desire of the House of Lords is to deal with this matter in a liberal spirit. They have gone a step further than we even asked them to go. In accordance with the strong opinions expressed in this House last year by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury), that officials of the House of Lords should retire at 65 years of age, they have passed a Resolution providing that retirement after the 65th birthday should be compulsory for every clerk appointed by the Clerk of Parliaments. They have done this without being requested by us, and they have placed themselves in a position not only in this respect, but with regard to the reduction of expenditure which I think deserves the approbation of this House. I would therefore ask my hon. and learned Friend not to press his Amendment to a Division. [An hon. MEMBER: Divide, divide!] Surely the question is worth discussing. I have shown how the House of Lords have treated the Treasury in this matter, and I am bound to bring forward every point which I think shows in their favour. I think I should be neglecting my duty if I did not do so. I should just like to show the difference in the distribution of clerks between the Commons and the Lords. In the Public Bill Office in the Lords there are two clerks, while in the Commons there are five. In the Committee Office the Lords have one principal clerk and four other clerks, or a total of five, whilst in the House of Commons there are one principal clerk, two seniors, five assistants, and seven juniors, or a total of 15. In the Private Bill Office the Lords have two clerks, against five in the Commons. In the Journals Office the Lords have three clerks, and the Commons have seven. Well, I think I have shown that there has been a desire on the part of the House of Lords to meet the wishes of the House of Commons in respect of their staff, and I again appeal to my hon. and learned Friend not to press his Amendment to a Division.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I do not move my Amendment on the ground of economy. I think we ought to show the House of Lords that in this matter the House of Commons is the predominant partner. It is solely on that ground that I intend to take a Division on my Amendment.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): I quite understand that my hon. and learned Friend has not raised this point as a question of pounds, shillings, and pence. Last year, however, the reduction of the Vote was put on the ground of economy—that is to say, that the salaries were at a higher rate in the House of Lords than in the House of Commons. That was a proper matter to be considered from a financial point. It was so considered, and I declined altogether this year to have put upon the Estimates a larger sum for the staff of the House of Lords than was voted by the House of Commons last year. As I understand, my hon. and learned Friend raises the question now rather as part of the differences of opinion which have arisen between the House of Lords and the House of Commons. I desire to point out to my hon. and learned Friend, however, that that is a very great question, and that it is a question that will have to be discussed, and probably have to be determined, but upon very different grounds from that of the salaries of the officers of the House of Lords. My hon. and learned Friend will remember in the play of *Henry V.* the objection taken, I think by the gallant Welshman, to carrying on war by killing the baggage bearers. That is not the way in which this contest ought to be waged. We ought not to begin this contest by an act which is not in accordance with the laws of war. It would be a very strange thing if we began a contest with a great man by cutting down the salaries of his servants. I remember the very same question arising when the Compensation for Disturbance Bill came on in 1881. The same proposal was then made in the House of Commons, and it fell to me then to advise the House not to indicate their indignation on the subject by a Vote of this character. I confess that I do not think it will conduce to the dignity of this House to enter upon this conflict—if conflict there is to be—between the House of Lords and the House of Commons by this particular method of procedure. The penalty, such as it is, does not fall upon the right persons. It falls upon those who are not Members of the House of Lords—upon men who have their careers in life, upon labourers who are worthy of their wages. [*Laughter.*] They are as much worthy of their wages as anyone else, as much as the gentlemen who serve this House. To reduce this Vote would be an act of personal injustice to individuals who are really outside this quarrel altogether. I would press my hon. and learned Friend not to take this particular course of action, which does not appear to me to be appropriate to the object he has in view. If there is to be a legislative contest between the House of Commons and the House of Lords, let us conduct it on higher ground than this. This is a method which, in my opinion, will bring down the character of the House of Commons, and therefore I sincerely trust that the hon. Member will not press the Motion he has made.

MR. SEXTON (Kerry, N.) rose to speak——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call attention to the fact that nothing really is open to discussion on this Vote except the duties and salaries of their clerks.

MR. SEXTON: The right hon. Gentleman did not limit himself entirely to such considerations.

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. Gentleman to go beyond them.

MR. SEXTON: I am confident that neither the character nor the credit of the House will suffer by anything that may be done on this Vote. It is open to the House of Commons on this Vote to take whatever course may appear most suitable to the judgment, or I would even say the just resentment, of this House without inflicting any damage whatever on this Institution. I doubt if any direct injustice would follow to any individual even if the House of Commons refused to confirm this Vote to-night. I have no doubt but the resources of the Constitution exercised in one way or another will be found capable of providing the officials of the House of Lords with their remuneration. And, indeed, I would say that even if the people refused to provide these officials with any remuneration, the private resources of the Lords themselves would be equal to the burden of paying their own clerks. We cannot always be perfectly logical in politics. The course of politics is not ruled by logic; men are bound to take the best opportunities that offer. The House of Lords themselves are not too nice in their dealings with this House, or with our country. They act without any regard to our convenience, and I do not think it rests upon the Representatives of the people here, and especially upon the Representatives of the people of Ireland, to have any nice regard to their convenience. The House of Lords, in my opinion, is an institution which acts without regard to the will of the people of the United Kingdom. It treats the conclusions of this House with contempt. It treats the necessities, and even the sufferings, of the people of Ireland with callous cruelty. I heard it said within the last couple of nights, in the House of Lords, that it was a matter for regret that Ireland had any Representatives here.

MR BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Mr. Mellor, I rise to a point of Order. Are we discussing the policy of the House of Lords, or only the staff which serves the House of Lords?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already said that I do not think the policy of the House of Lords is open to discussion on this Vote. The Committee can only discuss the duties and remuneration of the officials.

MR. SEXTON: Well, Sir, I have stated my opinion of the House of Lords. Now, I will only add that the only regret I feel is that a clean sweep has not been made. I would respectfully suggest to my hon. and learned Friend that the best course for him to adopt is that of withdrawing the Motion for the reduction. I, for one, as a Representative of the Irish people who have been insulted, and the peace of whose country has been endangered in a base political game—I, for one, feel that, as long as circumstances remain as they are, I cannot take any share in voting any money contributed by the Irish people for the support of the House of Lords.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I remember a Vote of this kind being snatched at the dinner hour, when the Address was under discussion at the beginning of the Session. A vote hostile to the House of Lords was carried against the Government by a small majority, but next day the Members who voted for it allowed their vote to be reversed. What is the use of this child's play? The Government are as clearly responsible for the Estimates as they were for the Address, and nothing is more certain than that, if this Vote were refused to-night, the Government being responsible for the Estimate——

MR. A. C. MORTON: We were told distinctly last Session that the Government were not responsible.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: This is the first time I have ever heard such a doctrine laid down in the House of Commons. I have always understood that the Government, in introducing Estimates, made themselves responsible for them. What is certain to happen if the Committee strikes out this £20,000 is that the Government will have to re-insert it on Report. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has explained perfectly clearly that the reason why the £500 was struck out last year was that the salary of the Clerk of Parliaments was a larger salary than that of the Senior Clerk in this House, although the work here is much heavier than that in the Lords. That was a plain issue, and I am very glad that the result of the Vote has been to amend that. Now, simply because of the action of the House of Lords on other matters, you are proposing to strike, not at the House of Lords as an institution—[*Nationalist cries of* "Yes"]—but at the servants of the House of Lords. I ask you, is it fair or manly to strike at the servants of the House of Lords? Abolish the House of Lords if you can convince the country that it ought to be done. [A Nationalist MEMBER: "Let them pay their own salaries."] Very well, then, take that issue. The House of Lords pays its own way by the fees it pays into the Treasury.

MR. A. C. MORTON: May I give the figures?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Member is never backward in speaking, and he can wait for his turn. This House has a perfect right to deal with the House of Lords; but I say that the attack on that House ought to be made in a straightforward fashion on the Institution itself, and not on the servants it employs. Just as you had to consent to your child's play on the Address being reversed, so, if you insist on this reduction, you will have to restore the Vote to-morrow.

MR. A. C. MORTON: I may point out that the definite cost on the Estimates of the House of Lords is £105,000, whereas the estimated receipts from fees for next year are only £44,000. I may say that, so far as I understand, the constitutional way for this House to object to anybody is to move a reduction of his salary.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): There is this difference between the action of the House on the Address and the action it is invited to take on the present Vote: On the occasion of the vote on the Address, hon. Members could only vote as a protest, and therefore it made no difference if, having recorded their protest, they afterwards assented to a different arrangement with regard to the Address. I can promise the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. W. Russell) that if the House rejects this vote for the salaries in the House of Lords, hon. Members will not come down to-morrow and reverse that vote. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said this was a great question, and it ought to be treated as such. Well, we are all anxious to treat it as a great question, and only want the opportunity of trying it out, and this is the first opportunity we have had. The right hon. Gentleman appealed to us, in the words of the play, not to make war upon the enemy by killing his baggage bearers; and the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) said it was not fair or manly to strike at the House of Lords by refusing the salary of their servants. I reply to that argument by asking is it fair, or manly, or courageous of the House of Lords to strike at the Irish Members by starving women and children in Ireland? Are we to be asked to vote a sum of £20,000 or £30,000 to an Institution which we believe to be a curse to both England and Ireland? If the House of

Lords is to continue to exist we are entitled to ask them to subscribe to pay their own servants. We hold that the work the Lords do is not of such a character as to justify us in voting the money of the people to continue it. For my part, speaking as an Irish Member and as a Radical who believes that this great question ought to be brought to a trial before the country as soon as possible, I earnestly appeal to every friend of Ireland in this House, and to every sincere Radical who really wishes to make this a live issue before the people of the country, not to be led away to vote this aid to the House of Lords by any arguments such as are usually put forward on this subject, but to vote on this question in such a way that the people can believe they are in earnest. An argument was used by the hon. Member for South Tyrone such as I have never heard used before. He said that all Governments were responsible for the Estimates they brought into this House. Did he mean to convey that the Committee was not at liberty to decide whether certain items should be paid or not?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No, I do not contend that, and I never said anything of the kind.

MR. DILLON said, he earnestly appealed to every Radical in that House to show to the people of this country and the people in Ireland that they were in earnest in their opposition to the House of Lords.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 58; Noes 67.—(Division List, No. 235.)

MR. BARTLEY: I think, Mr. Mellor, you might record the fact that we have again saved the Government from their own friends.

Original Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 66; Noes 57.—(Division List, No. 236.)

7. £28,133, to complete the sum for House of Commons Offices.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I think I could very well make out a case for reducing this Vote, because, judging by the amount of work we have accomplished, we are not worth the money we cost.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he wanted to say a word or two about the accounts of the Kitchen Committee. Early in the Session, on the Vote on Account, they had a balance-sheet presented to them, but it was not audited. He would like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he would see that the balance-sheet presented for 1894 was audited by the Auditor General, so that they might have it put before them in proper form.

SIR W. HARCOURT was understood to say that he would much more readily grant this request if the food was better than it was. As for the auditing of the account, he had no objection to it. They were reckoning without their host, which was an unwise thing to do, but he would consider the matter.

MR. DALZIEL said, he should like to ask for an assurance from the Secretary to the Treasury that there should be a more efficient distribution of Papers from the Vote Office. Parliamentary Papers which should be available to Members at the Vote Office in the afternoon were often not available even at the time of the adjournment of the House. He hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would see that when any Papers were issued there should be a sufficient number in the Vote Office for all Members.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, these Papers were distributed under the authority of a Committee. He was aware that complaints had been made on the subject, and he would see if the Papers could be distributed earlier.

DR. CLARK said, he thought it was time that some arrangement should be made as to the manner of the remuneration of the clerks in the House. They had four principal clerks beginning at £850, and going up to £1,000. The principal clerks were now getting the full sum, and in addition there were certain allowances. These allowances were things that belonged to a past time, and ought not to be continued any longer. One clerk got £300 a year for acting as paymaster, and an extra payment for taking Divisions. When any change was made these allowances ought to be swept away, and proper remuneration made by payment of salary.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, the appointment of the clerks was under the control of the Speaker, and he would take care that his attention was called to this suggestion.

Vote agreed to.

8. £48,476, to complete the sum for Treasury and Subordinate Departments.

*MR. WEIR said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer told them on the previous evening that if they were dissatisfied with his services they might displace him. He did not think that was a dignified position for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to take up. He had better hopes of the right hon. Gentleman. So far as the Highlands of Scotland were concerned, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would better fulfil his duties in the future than in the past. In other respects he could not make any complaint. He had been a most faithful supporter of the right hon. Gentlemen. For the last two years he had been living on hope, but "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and to-night his heart was sick because of the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues on the Front Bench. So much for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He hoped he would do better next year. Now, he found there was in this group a first-class clerk who received £700 a year, with allowances. He did not like the look of these allowances at all. It was a sort of payment by salary and commission. A salary of £700 a year was a substantial sum, and the man who received it ought to be satisfied, and other men should be found to earn the allowances of £150 or £250 a year. He had no objection to large salaries if they had good men to whom to pay them, and the work to do worth large salaries; but he did not like these allowances at all, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury and his colleagues would abandon them in the future. He could not refrain from referring to the £3,000 which was divided between three Junior Lords of the Treasury, because he wanted to call attention to the conduct of one of these gentlemen. It was a painful sight to an ardent Liberal like himself, and an ardent supporter of the present Government, when a Resolution was moved in the House on the crofter question to see one of these Junior Lords advising a Count-out. He objected to these Junior Lords being paid when they obstructed the useful business of the country, instead of helping it. He did hope that no liberties would be taken with Highland Members in future. Was it because they were small in numbers? Though few they might be able to strike an ugly blow. He, however, would make no threats.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he must ask the hon. Gentleman to speak louder; he could not hear him.

MR. WEIR said, he had taken objection to the allowances to Treasury clerks, and to these large sums of money going out to the Junior Lords. He was sorry the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not present when he made reference to him, but now he was present he would express the hope that the right hon. Gentleman would do his duty more manfully in the future than in the past.

Vote agreed to.

9. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £60,863, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home Department and Subordinate Offices."

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) said, there was a large, absolute, and proportionate increase in this Vote, which, however, he would not complain of, because the departments in respect of which the increase was made were the departments in which the most useful work was done. These departments to which he referred were really more deserving of the name of labour departments than the Board of Trade by which the name had been most unjustifiably appropriated. The Factory and Mines Inspectors were the real labour correspondents, and were the eyes and ears whereby the Home Secretary learned of the real condition of the working classes all over the country. He noticed that there were four additional Assistant Inspectors of Mines appointed, and he would like to ask in what districts the Assistant Inspectors would discharge their duties. He would also like to ascertain how the experiment of making clerical allowances to Mining Inspectors had been found to work out, and if it had been found to give satisfactory results? It was an experiment entered into with a great deal of doubt, and he should be glad to find it had been satisfactory. The staff of the Factory Inspectors he noticed was increased by a number of lady Inspectors.

It seemed to him that if the principle of appointing female Inspectors was good at all, a larger number than four were necessary. It might not be necessary to have a female Inspector in every district where there was a male Inspector, but it was obvious that the number of female *employés* was extremely large, and they were scattered over the whole three Kingdoms, and the system of female Factory Inspectors might have to be further extended. With regard to the sum set apart for special inquiries, he thought that £900 was hardly sufficient, and he would remind his hon. Friend that no less a sum than £1,200 had to be provided by a Supplemental Estimate at the beginning of the Session, and that the £1,200 was only part of a total of £2,800 so spent in 1893-4. These inquiries were conducted by the Home Secretary in order to frame rules under the Act of 1891 with regard to certain unwholesome trades. The money was taken for work to come to an end in March, 1894, but he would be surprised if he were told that these inquiries were actually then completed, and that no further work remained to be done. It seemed to him that the policy of the Act of 1891 was that if these inquiries did not go on continually they should go on frequently, and that a sum of money should always be kept on the Votes to supply the Department with the necessary funds. Of course, the object was to secure that the officers of the Department should be up in the very latest improvements that science was able to bring to bear on the improvement of unwholesome and dangerous trades, and to enable them to supply the Home Secretary with such information as would enable him to frame rules to render these trades less unwholesome and dangerous.

Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) endorsed the eulogistic remarks of the hon. Member with regard to the work done by the Inspectors of factories and workshops. He also agreed with the statement that the number of women Inspectors was miserably inadequate for the work which devolved upon the staff, and he hoped that at least 10 additional women Inspectors would be appointed in the next 12 months.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. George Russell, North Beds.) said, with regard to the Inspectors of Mines there would be one Assistant Inspector of Metalliferous Mines stationed in Cumberland, two Assistant Inspectors of Metalliferous Mines and Quarries in North Wales, and one Assistant Inspector of Coal Mines in South Wales. In respect to the system of allowances for clerical assistance, it had been found to work satisfactorily : at least, no complaints had been made. With regard to female Inspectors of Factories, he agreed that their number was inadequate for the work that had to be done, and he thought it would follow as a matter of course that they must be increased. He had been reminded, for instance, of the case of Belfast, which, in itself, would afford abundant occupation for a female Inspector having regard to the number of females, amounting to many thousands, employed in the industries of that place. That was only one instance, but it had been very difficult to get the powers that be to see the necessity for the institution of female Inspectors even on the smallest scale, and the whole arrangements on this head were at present only tentative and experimental. But the experiment having been found to answer satisfactorily, he did not anticipate any very great difficulty in increasing the number of female Inspectors employed. With regard to special inquiries, the hon. Gentleman was no doubt aware that one of these—that relating to white lead works—was a very costly one, but it was a satisfactory one in many respects. Definite results with regard to particular diseases had been obtained, and these had been acted upon in reference to lead working in potteries, and an alteration of the rules made. At present there was a lull in these inquiries ; but he presumed that the inquiries would be carried on from year to year, according as they were found necessary or as circumstances might arise in any special trade which would appear to demand investigation.

Mr. KEIR-HARDIE (West Ham, S.) said, he wished to urge upon the Home Office that female Inspectors should be drawn from the ranks of working women, who would have the necessary practical and technical knowledge to enable them to understand the complaints and grievances of the workers. He himself was aware of a case in which a lady Inspector was utterly unable to grasp the meaning of complaints which were made to her, and he trusted that in future appointments practical working women, otherwise qualified, would get a preference over those who were not so qualified.

*Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) called attention to the fact that several officials in the Home Office held more than one appointment. For instance, the Private Secretary to the Home Secretary was also a clerk in the House of Commons and received a salary in respect of each appointment. He very much objected to these dual appointments. There was also the case of a higher grade Second Division clerk drawing £350 a year, who had a pension of £54 15s. from the Royal Artillery. He thought a Royal Artilleryman would be better employed in some department of the War Office, and that a civilian would do equally well for the Home Office. If in Order he would wish to draw attention to a case he had brought under the notice of the Home Secretary a few days ago—namely, the case of the Irish harvesters who were assaulted at Potters Bar. He went down there on last Wednesday and saw these men for the second time, because he did not care to trouble the House with any matter into which he had not fully inquired. In one of these cases a man was sentenced to 21 days' imprisonment with hard labour because he happened to be going home quietly on a Saturday night with some of his countrymen. The Home Secretary said these harvesters were found by the police lying on some hay in a hut in a field. As a rule, farmers did not provide spring mattresses and feather beds for Irish harvesters, and he thought the observation of the Home Secretary was not a proper one to make. These Irishmen were spoken of by the farmer who had employed them for 15 years in the highest terms as sober, steady men. The man who was sent to gaol for 21 days was going quietly along the road cutting some tobacco when a policeman rushed at him and charged him that he was going to stab the police. The unfortunate man had the misfortune to be an Irishman; but for all that, he thought Irishmen in this country should receive a protection from the law which in this case he did not think they had received. They were treated insolently by the police.

The CHAIRMAN: So long as the hon. Gentleman confines himself to anything the Home Secretary might have done in the matter he is in Order; but he is not in Order in discussing what the police have done.

*Mr. WEIR said, it was because the Home Secretary had failed to do the work for which he was so handsomely paid, that he drew attention to this most distressing case. Of course, they were told that full inquiry was made, but others could make inquiries as well as the Home Secretary, and he hoped that the Home Secretary would take care to see that his information was accurate, and was not inaccurate, as it was in this case. There was another matter to which he wished to refer. The London County Council had issued Rules relating to buildings——

The CHAIRMAN: That is not in Order on this Vote.

Mr. WEIR said, he would venture to hope that the system of allowing clerks and officials to hold dual appointments would be stopped in the Home Department.

*Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston) congratulated the Home Office on having appointed female Inspectors, and expressed the belief that those already appointed were highly qualified for their work. He had no doubt whatever but if additional Inspectors were necessary that ladies admirably fitted for the work could be found. No doubt, practical experience as urged by the hon. Member for West Ham would be useful, but that was only one qualification, and there were others of great importance. He himself had the privilege of submitting to the Home Secretary the name of a lady admirably fitted for an office of this kind. With regard to the Inspectors of Metalliferous Mines, he would like to know why the Inspector recently appointed to Cumberland was to be excused from inspecting coal mines if necessary? The system under which an Inspector of Metalliferous Mines might be called on in case of emergency or accident to inspect coal mines had been found very useful, and he would be glad to have some information as to what arrangements had been made to enable this particular Inspector to be excused from performing a duty which he might legally be called upon to perform.

*MR. THORNTON (Clapham) said, he wished to call attention to the case of the junior clerks of the Second Division in the Home Office, and through their case to that of those employed in other Offices, and to urge that they should have an extension of the period of vacation at present allowed to them. He would like the Committee to understand the exact position of these clerks. There was an Order in Council made in March, 1890, fixing the salary of junior Second Division clerks at £70, with a yearly increment of £5. Previous to this it had been £95, with an increment of £15, in each of these cases the hours being seven a day. The Order in Council of 1890 was, no doubt, an advantage to those who were already in the Service before it was issued; but to those who came in afterwards it was a disadvantage both in respect to salary and future prospects, whilst the annual leave of absence of three weeks was cut down to two. It was to gain that three weeks to the Second Division clerks that he had mainly put down his Motion.

*MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he was sorry to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he wished to point out that the arrangement as to the pay and leave of absence of the clerks in the Home Office was regulated absolutely by a Treasury Minute, and the Secretary of State would be quite unable, even if he wished to do so, to meet his hon. Friend in this matter without the sanction of the Treasury. The Home Office acted under a Treasury Minute of recent date, and the scale of remuneration laid down by that Minute applied equally to all Departments of the Public Service. This could not, therefore, be represented to be for any practical and effective purpose a Home Office matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is so. It is out of Order on this Vote, and ought to come on the Treasury Vote.

MR. JOHN BURNS was quite prepared to accept what the Under Secretary of State had said—namely, that these clerks were paid under a Treasury Minute, and that, therefore, the discussion of their salaries, holidays, and emoluments should come on the Treasury Vote. There was one matter with which the Home Office had to do, and that was the promotion to the higher offices in the Home Office. He rose briefly to ask the Under Secretary for the Home Department whether the Home Office had any views on the question of the promotion of the Second Division clerks, and, if so, were they going to transmit them to the Treasury, under whose Department the clerks were paid and regulated?

*MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, his interposition had been made with a view to saving the time of the Committee. He did not want the hon. Member for Clapham to have to make his statement and then discover that the matter was not one for this Vote. Without offering any opinion as to the scale of the remuneration of the Second Division clerks, he might say that as regarded the leave of absence it appeared utterly inadequate to the proportion of the year in which the clerks were employed in official duty, and if it was in the power of the Secretary of State to secure any reasonable modification by the Treasury of this Rule, he was quite confident his right hon. Friend would have great pleasure in obtaining such modification, as should he (Mr. Russell) also. In reply to the hon. Member for Battersea, he had some views on the subject of promotion, as had also the Secretary for State, who, if a question was addressed to him on the subject, would probably give a more definite reply. With respect to the Private Secretary of the Secretary of State, in a case where he chose his Private Secretary from among the clerks in a Public Office, the universal rule was that the Secretary should draw his salary as clerk in addition to the emoluments he received as Private Secretary. With respect to the occurrence at Potters Bar, the Secretary of State would institute further inquiries into the circumstances. With reference to the case which had been mentioned of the ex-Artilleryman, he was employed as clerk to the Inspector of Explosives, and he was appointed because of the experience he had gained at Woolwich. He thought that was a very good and sufficient reason for having chosen him.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Will the case of the Second Division clerks in Scotland be considered?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: That would not come within my province.

*MR. AINSWORTH (Cumberland, Egremont) said, that when the question of the appointment of Mr. Leck as an Inspector of Metalliferous Mines in Cumberland was raised in the House a short time ago—an occasion on which he unfortunately was absent—it was stated by the Member for Mid Cumberland that Mr. Leck had been an election agent of his at the last Election, and that he had paid him £100 for his services. He had since seen his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cumberland, and had told him that his figures were slightly incorrect. He thought it right to mention, as a matter of personal explanation, that Mr. Leck had been employed by him as an election agent for a period of 10 weeks at a salary of £4 per week, and that he therefore received £40, which was set out in the statement of his election expenses. He had only to add that he had known Mr. Leck for years. Mr. Leck had been a working miner who by his ability raised himself to the position of underground manager, and subsequently manager of mines, in which he (Mr. Ainsworth) was interested. He had a thoroughly practical acquaintance with the working of metalliferous mines, and was, therefore, the very best man that could be chosen for the post to which he had been appointed. He was very popular with the miners, who were very anxious that he should be appointed, and a great majority of the mine-owners of the district were also quite willing that he should get the post of Inspector. In recommending Mr. Leck to the Home Secretary, he (Mr. Ainsworth) believed he was recommending the best man that could be obtained for the post, and he did not at all consider that the fitness or unfitness of a man for such an appointment depended on his political views.

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) was ready to admit that as to the amount paid to Mr. Leck he fell into an error, and he apologised to the hon. Member and to the Committee for having said that he had paid Mr. Leck £100. But the difference between the payment of £40 and £100 did not in any way remove the objection he took on a previous occasion to the appointment of a man who had been actively engaged as an election agent of one political Party. There was also another matter in connection with this question to which he desired to call attention. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary said on the former occasion that this question would not have been brought before the House at all by him (Mr. J. W. Lowther) if it had not been for the fact that Mr. Leck was a working man who had worked his way upwards. He should say at once that he was unaware of that fact; and even if he had been aware of it, it would not have influenced him in the slightest degree. As the hon. Member for Battersea had said on the former occasion, the fact that a man was a working man did not entitle him to any special consideration in those appointments any more than a member of any other class of the community.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.) said, that when this matter was first discussed, he asked whether the Rule of the Civil Service that there should be a medical examination of the candidate before the appointment was made, had been carried out in this case. That Rule had been established in the interest of the Public Service with a view to securing that the candidate was physically able to discharge the duties of the office; and it was one that he thought ought to be carried out in every case. On the other hand, he agreed that in an appointment to a post of this kind, where technical knowledge was the chief qualification, there need not be a theoretical examination. He thought the Committee ought to congratulate itself on having such an innocent Government. Here was a gentleman recommended by the Radicals of his district — a gentleman who had actually acted as a Parliamentary agent at the General Election, and yet the innocent Home Secretary never knew of that matter in making the appointment. He had recently drawn attention to a somewhat similar case in which a Professor had got a large pension out of the Civil List, and the Government was so innocent that they did not know that the Professor was one of their most ardent supporters.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) expressed dissent from the statement that it was not necessary that a man with such testimonials and recommendations as Mr. Leck should be required to furnish satisfactory evidence as to his fitness to discharge the duties of the post he sought. In Mr. Leck's case the testimonials seemed to have been testimonials of the general public estimation in which he was held, and not testimonials from people who had the means of knowing that he was peculiarly fit for this appointment. He thought it was a matter of very great importance in the appointment of Inspectors to mines that the Home Secretary should satisfy himself not only as to the esteem in which the candidate was held, but as to his fitness for the proper and systematic discharge of the duties of the office. He should like to know what means were taken to provide that Mr. Leck should not be called upon to act as Inspector of Coal Mines. The intention of the Statute was that an Inspector of Metalliferous Mines should be liable to be called upon to inspect coal mines. In an ordinary case that was a desirable arrangement, as in the case of an accident it might be necessary to visit a mine immediately, and an Inspector of Coal Mines might not be available for the purpose; but in this case Mr. Leck had no qualification to act as an Inspector of Coal Mines.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.) said, that on the Report of the Vote on Account there had been a full discussion of the merits or demerits of this particular appointment, and he did not in the least complain that the matter should be raised again, because he thought it was of general importance. He entirely agreed that, in respect to appointments of this kind, the first duty of the Secretary of State was to satisfy himself of the fitness and competency of the person recommended to him to discharge the duties he would be called upon to perform. In this case the testimonials did satisfy him of Mr. Leck's qualifications, apart from any examination. He was not a strong devotee of the principle of examinations, for he did not think competitive examination always brought the best men to the top. Still, he felt that it was a great convenience to a Minister whenever he could throw an office open to competitive examination, for it saved him from one of the most invidious and unpleasant duties he had sometimes to perform, and protected him from personal and political pressure in favour of candidates for the appointment. But the appointments of Inspector of Metalliferous Mines and Inspector of Coal Mines stood on a different plane, owing to the peculiar duties to be performed requiring the most intimate, practical, and technical knowledge; and he found that in such cases competitive examinations did not produce the best men for the purpose. It was on those grounds alone that in making the appointments in question he proceeded in the manner he did. As to whether, where the necessity for an examination had been dispensed with, the ordinary requirements of the Civil Service as to health should be insisted on, he found that it had not been the practice to insist on those requirements. If the practice was to be applied in one case it should be applied in all. He should like to see a change made whereby they would insist on that as a preliminary condition to any Government employment. Personally, he agreed that any man who entered the service of the State ought to produce evidence that he was in good physical condition. As to Mr. Leck's appointment, he was recommended not only by the miners, but by the employers of the district. He had had a representative statement from a number of the most important employers in the district, in which they said not only that the appointment of Mr. Leck would be a popular appointment, but that he was the best man to be employed. He was sorry if he had imputed to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lowther) any desire to exclude Mr. Leck because he was or had been a working man. The hon. Gentleman did not know that fact at the time, and neither did he himself know that Mr. Leck was a prominent politician, so that ignorance of prominent facts in Mr. Leck's career was shared between the hon. Gentleman and himself. So far as the appointment was concerned, he believed Mr. Leck was quite adequate to the discharge of all his duties. As to the point made by the hon. Member for Preston that Mr. Leck ought to be capable of inspecting coal mines as well as metalliferous mines, it would be a great drawback to the efficient inspection of metalliferous mines if a man, specially qualified for the post of Inspector of such mines, were to be ineligible because he had no special qualification for inspecting coal mines. There was a Coal Mine Inspector at Newcastle, and Mr. Oswald, an Assistant Inspector at Whitehaven, so that it was not likely that any emergency would arise which could not be adequately met. There must be some specialisation in an appointment of this kind. On the whole, the procedure which the Home Office had adopted was the best.

*Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, that now Mr. Leck was appointed all further controversy on the question was to be deprecated. But the facts standing unexplained loudly called for explanation, and justified his hon. Friend in the course he had taken. There was no doubt that they now had in the position of Inspector a man capable of less work than had formerly been the case; but now that Mr. Leck had been appointed they must all desire that he should possess as much public confidence as possible. It was absolutely necessary to ascertain the possession of some qualifications for the post of Inspector of Mines. An employer of miners was not allowed to conduct his industry except through the hands and brain of a manager, who must possess a certificate, to obtain which he had to pass an examination. As the Inspector's duty was to supervise on behalf of the State, to check, and possibly to censure the manager, that Inspector ought to have nearly the same qualification as the manager, and they should be ascertained by a similar, if not an identical, process.

Mr. BALLANTINE (Coventry) said, he desired to move the reduction of the Home Secretary's salary by £100 in order to call attention to the case of the man Smith, who was executed at Nottingham in March last, and also the action of the Home Office and the necessity for a Court of Criminal Appeal. Smith was charged with the murder of a young woman, a hospital nurse, by shooting her with a revolver. Smith had held the highest possible character, and was in most prosperous circumstances, keeping a factory in Nottingham; and there was no motive whatever imputed to him for the crime. He had met the young woman only twice before the commission of the crime at the house of his own mother, whose friend she was. On the second occasion he arranged that he would take her and her mother over his factory, where he had perfected various inventions. Two days intervened, and during that time Smith bought a revolver for the purpose, as counsel for the prosecution suggested, of killing the girl. But that suggestion was incredible, as they were on the best possible terms, and the arrangement made was that the girl should be accompanied by her mother on her visit to the factory. As it happened, she went alone, however; and after she had been there some time in the company of the prisoner three shots were heard. The young woman came out wounded by one of the shots. The grave fact that three shots were fired was thus explained by the prisoner—that he did not know the pistol was loaded; that it went off accidentally; and that, when he found that he had shot the girl, he lost his head and fired off the other chambers. The girl died in hospital four days afterwards, after having made several statements to the nurses, all of which exonerated the prisoner from blame. [Mr. Asquith: No.] At any rate, in her dying statement she said that no words passed between them; that Smith levelled a pistol at her head saying, "Your money or your life"; and that she thought "it was in fun." The prisoner never varied his statement that the occurrence was accidental. The evidence at the trial was entirely circumstantial and inferential. At the trial, after the case for the prosecution had lasted for two days and closed at 6 o'clock on the second day, counsel for the defence asked for an adjournment. The Judge said that he had an engagement in London two days later, and that the case must proceed. The counsel for the defence expostulated and apologised for the inadequacy of the defence. The trial was concluded at 9 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: The only matter under discussion is the Home Secretary's salary. The Home Office could not be concerned with the manner in which the trial was conducted.

Mr. BALLANTINE said, he brought this into connection with the Vote showing that these were the facts before the Home Secretary when he considered the question of reprieve. The next morning the Judge summed up against the prisoner in a speech of two and a-half hours, in which he said not a single word in favour of the prisoner.

The CHAIRMAN again reminded the hon. Member that the Home Secretary was in no way responsible for the conduct of the Judge.

MR. BALLANTINE said, that his contention was that the facts before the Home Secretary would have justified him in advising a reprieve of the prisoner. One of the most material facts was that Smith did not have a fair trial. The jury recommended him to mercy on account of his high character, and the Judge ignored the recommendation. In a civil case this injustice would have been rectified by a Court of Appeal. A wrong done could be righted. But in a criminal case, involving life and death, the Judge and jury, though equally liable to error, were held to be always right. The only remedy in the absence of a Court of Appeal was to appeal to the Home Secretary. In the case of a question of a mere remission of sentence, the present system might work very well, but where the question was whether a verdict of guilty of wilful murder was right or wrong, the system was most unsatisfactory. The Home Secretary might be a lawyer or he might not—he was usually selected because he was a politician; he held his inquiry in secret, the prisoner was not represented, and the Judge before whom the case was tried was referred to in order to ascertain whether, in his opinion, the verdict was just or not. In the present case, the materials which were put before the Home Secretary were overwhelmingly in favour of a reprieve being granted. In the first place, no motive whatever could be alleged for the crime; and, in the second place, the two persons who were witnesses of the occurrence both maintained that it was an accident; thirdly, the man had not had a fair trial; fourthly, the jury recommended him to mercy; and, fifthly, a petition was signed by 10,000 persons, including the jury, in favour of a reprieve. Notwithstanding all these circumstances, the Home Secretary refused to reprieve the man on the most inconvenient day—namely, Good Friday—and he fixed the day of execution for the following Tuesday.

MR. ASQUITH: I had nothing whatever to do with the matter. The Sheriff fixes the date of execution.

MR. BALLANTINE said, that in any case, the execution was fixed and carried out in the Easter Recess, and no opportunity had been given to him to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to the case before the prisoner was executed. Another circumstance to which he would refer was with reference to an alleged confession which the prisoner was said to have made. Rumours of that confession having been made had reached the relatives of the prisoner, and a question was asked in the House whether he had made a confession two nights before his execution to the effect that he had bought the revolver for the purpose of shooting the girl, and to whom the confession was made, and why the fact had not been communicated to his family in the lifetime of the prisoner; and to that question the Home Secretary refused to give any reply. The result was that the relatives of the executed man were unable to test the truth of the story. It was incredible that the accused should have bought the revolver for the purpose of shooting a girl whom he had only seen once before and with whom he was upon the best of terms, and the man himself had maintained to his last hour that he was innocent. On the day after the alleged confession the unhappy man took leave of his family, to each of whom he reiterated his assertion of his innocence, and on the following day on the scaffold he still maintained his innocence. This case, in his opinion, showed incontestably the necessity for the establishment of a Court of Appeal in this country. In 1892 the Judges had made a Report in favour of the establishment of such a Court of Appeal, and the Home Secretary had said that the responsibility that rested upon him in connection with this duty of granting reprieves was too great for him to bear, and he concurred in the necessity for establishing such a Court. That recommendation, however, was thrown into the waste-paper basket, and nothing had resulted from it. He maintained that if there had been a Court such as existed in every civilised country in the world, presided over by the Judges of the land, before whom the prisoner might have been represented by counsel, this man would not have been executed. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £60,763 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Ballantine.*)

*MR. ASQUITH said, that the hon. Gentleman, in the exercise of his undoubted discretion, had thought fit to take upon himself the very grave responsibility of bringing this case before the House, and, by moving the reduction of this Vote, to ask the House to pronounce a judgment upon the action of the Home Secretary in the discharge of the most delicate and responsible duty that could be imposed upon him. He did not for one moment dispute the constitutional right of the House to question, to criticise, and, if necessary, to censure the action of a Minister in the performance of his duty; but he said in regard to this particular duty, so delicate in its conditions and so grave in its consequences, that the House should not take such a course without having the fullest information on the subject before it. How was it possible for a Committee of that House, constituted as they were that night, not one Member of which had considered the evidence or had bestowed upon that evidence, as he had bestowed upon it in this particular case, hours and days of the most minute and painfully careful consideration—how was it possible for such a Committee to discharge efficiently the duties of a Court of Criminal Appeal? How many of the hon. Members present had ever heard of this case before it was brought under their notice by the hon. Member that night, or had read the evidence which had induced a Judge and jury, acting under a full sense of their responsibility, to find a verdict of guilty? The only effect of the hon. Member's Motion was to ask the House to discharge a duty which, with the best will in the world, they could only discharge incompletely and imperfectly. The hon. Member asked the House to review the decision of the Judge and the jury, and to censure him for the action he had taken in the matter. He could assure the House that no duty could possibly be cast upon a Minister involving a graver responsibility than that of determining whether a reprieve should be granted or withheld. No one who had not had such a responsibility cast upon him could know the anxiety that such a responsibility entailed. Although he did not complain in the least degree of the course taken by the hon. Member in this matter nor question the right of the House to determine that a Minister of the House had acted wrongly, he maintained that the House would require far greater information on the subject than had been laid before it by the hon. Member before it would be in a position to appreciate the question that had been raised. He had felt bound to make this preliminary protest without in the least degree questioning the earnest belief and sincerity of the hon. Gentleman in the matter. He would now proceed to state to the House the circumstances of the case. The accused was a young man who was convicted by a jury of the greatest offence known to the law, that of shooting at a girl and causing her death. The case was not one in which any extenuating circumstances, such as provocation, were alleged to exist. It was a case either of a most brutal murder, committed in the most deliberate manner, or it was the death of a woman occasioned by the purest accident. The jury had found the prisoner guilty, and the learned Judge who presided at the trial had expressed his opinion that the case was one of the most cruel and deliberate murders he had ever heard of in the course of his long criminal experience. The hon. Member might be right in contending that a Court of Appeal ought to be established in this country, and, for his own part, having to discharge this particularly invidious duty, he would welcome almost any reform that would take away from him some share of the responsibility imposed upon him in the discharge of this most grave and important duty. But this was not a question whether or no it was desirable to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal. The question was whether, there being no such Court in existence, he was bound in this particular case to overrule the verdict of the jury and the opinion of the learned Judge? This young man, who was of a respectable character, and had some amount of inventive genius which had enabled him to invent a machine which was useful in his branch of the cotton trade, lived at Nottingham. He became acquainted with the girl in question, who was a hospital nurse at Liverpool, but who was temporarily staying at

Nottingham on a holiday visit to her mother. She was at the time engaged to be married to a young man in her own station of life. A few days before the murder she was invited to visit the mother of the accused, and it could not be doubted that the accused fell violently in love with her on the first occasion on which they met. The accused asked her to come on the Saturday morning to inspect the machine which he had invented and which was at the mill. On the intervening day he went to a gunmaker's shop in Nottingham and purchased a revolver. He was totally ignorant of the use of firearms, and asked the shopman how the revolver was to be loaded and fired. Later in the day he was heard in the mill which he occupied firing the revolver by way of practice in order to see how it worked. On the Saturday morning, the girl having asked her mother to go with her to keep the appointment, and the mother having declined to do so, left for his house. He asked those interested in the case to follow what happened. There was an outside staircase leading up to the set of rooms in which the young man was in the habit of working. Smith went up the staircase with the girl, unlocked the door at the top, the two went in, and he locked the door after them. They then went up to the other room. There were no witnesses of what happened there. After they had been there for an hour and a-half the persons working in the lower part of the mill heard first of all one shot from a pistol, and then, at the interval of a minute or two, two more shots. A moment afterwards the girl was seen to force her way through the locked door and to rush down the stairs into the yard of the mill holding her hand to her throat, in which she was wounded. She staggered across the yard into the street, where she fell suffering from the wound, which afterwards proved fatal. At least five minutes after the girl had left the building the man walked unconcernedly down the staircase. He did not hasten after the girl; he made no attempt to succour her; he did not even attempt to find out where she had gone; he did not make any inquiry as to what was her condition or the state of her wounds. The girl's dress was torn in a way which showed there had been some struggle between her and someone else. He did not think there could be any doubt that the facts were totally inconsistent with the theory of accident. It was evident that the man had made improper advances to the girl; that on her resisting he fired the first shot; that as she fled from the room he fired the two succeeding shots in the hope of completing the work he had done. There were two stairs leading up to the staircase, and one of the two succeeding shots was found upon the lower staircase embedded in the wall, proving that the man had pursued her. These were the facts upon which the jury were asked to believe that the man and the girl were examining the pistol together, that in some kind of play he presented the pistol at her, that the pistol went off, and that she had been accidentally shot; they were asked to believe that the affair was not the result of design. Was there any hon. Gentleman in the House who would have come to that conclusion? He thought there was the strongest possible evidence of design; design, in the first instance, in the original purchase of the pistol, and design still more deliberate in its character in firing not only a single shot, but a succession of shots when he had failed to accomplish his purpose. He was exceeding sorry his hon. Friend, speaking in the interest of the relatives of the young man, had compelled him to recite these facts to the House. He could not help thinking no good purpose had been served either in his interest or in the interest of the public by going over the terrible story again. It was true the girl, after she was shot, made inconsistent statements as to the circumstances. In one of those statements she sought to exonerate the man, while in others she deliberately declared that the presenting of the pistol and the firing of the shots was of set purpose. He, on those facts, was asked to reverse the decision which the jury had come to on the evidence adduced before them after severe cross-examination. Was there any hon. Member who would have incurred that responsibility? He should be very glad if he could be spared the pain and anxiety of determining these questions. In this case he was satisfied, and he assured the Committee now that having, as he had, other means of knowledge besides those which were actually presented to the jury, and which, having been conveyed to him in confidence, he was not able to divulge, he was satisfied that this was a just verdict. Painful and distasteful as it always was to allow the extreme sentence of the law to be carried out, he felt he had no alternative. He did not rely, and he did not ask the House to rely, on the other information he possessed. He asserted that, from the facts as they were presented to the jury and as he had detailed them, he believed this was a case in which the jury were amply justified in coming to the verdict they arrived at. He felt he should have been taking a most unwarrantable responsibility if, in the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, he had reversed the decision to which the jury came.

Mr. BALLANTINE said, that facts which the right hon. Gentleman gave as uncontroverted were certainly contested in every way. One of them was not stated at the trial at all. The locking of the door was suggested by the learned Judge; but, as a matter of fact, this poor woman was able, in almost a dying condition, to get out of the room. That did not look as if there was any obstacle in her way. As to a shot being fired on the staircase it had already been shown that the man had been practising with the revolver the night before; and with regard to the dress being torn, there was no suggestion at the trial that the prisoner had attempted any violence on the girl. The suggestion was thrown out by the Judge, and it was a suggestion by which the jury were impressed to give a verdict against the prisoner. He maintained that the dying statement of the woman was sufficient to exonerate the prisoner.

Mr. A. C. MORTON, while agreeing that the responsibility of the Home Secretary ought not to be interfered with if possible, regretted the unfortunate tone in which the right hon. Gentleman treated the case. He trusted he would adopt a milder tone in future. He very much regretted also that he left out of his speech the fact that the jury recommended the prisoner to mercy. He ought also to have told them whether he ever thought of dealing with the recommendation of the Judges in regard to the formation of a Criminal Court of Appeal.

The DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. A. O'Connor) said, the hon. Gentleman was not entitled to go into that question.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he thought in this case there were sufficient reasons for some delay for further inquiry. His opinion was that they as Representatives of the nation had a right to bring these matters forward.

Sir W. HARCOURT said that, having for five years endured the terrible responsibility which was now thrown upon his right hon. Friend, he must protest against the remarks made by the Member for Peterborough. When he himself had the responsibility of determining the question of life and death and advising the exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, he always did protest, and always should protest, against a body which was really incompetent to discharge the duty, attempting to interfere with the responsibility of the Secretary of State. If they did not trust the Secretary of State in matters of this kind, let him be removed from his office. That was the alternative. The House of Commons could not rejudge the fact; it had not the material; and to weaken his authority and discredit him in public estimation in the exercise of his responsibility was a public danger and evil. He had always appealed to the House of Commons, when questions of this kind had been raised, not to attempt to exercise functions for which they were absolutely unfit. It was a very proper question to determine whether the House ought or ought not to leave such responsibility with the Secretary of State, or whether they should put it elsewhere; but, as long as that responsibility rested upon him, the House must strengthen the Home Secretary's hands. He hoped the House would in the future, as he was happy to say it always had done in the past, discourage such discussions on all occasions.

Mr. STOREY disagreed entirely in the attitude taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had never heard the Leader of the House, upon a serious matter, adopt such a tone, and he trusted he never should again. He justified the raising of the subject all the more, as many persons felt a mistake had been made. Suppose that, when challenged in the name of the people, the Home Secretary had been unable to make out a case which this House could accept, would not the Leader of the House have felt that the hon. Member was amply justified in bringing the case forward? That was the condemnation of the tone which the Leader of the House had adopted. Although his hon. Friend seemed to make out a strong case, yet on the whole the House would probably feel they might safely leave this and probably other matters in the hands of the Home Secretary.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he agreed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that a Home Secretary's conduct in a case of this kind ought not to be called in question by an Assembly like the House of Commons. In his opinion, the tone of the Home Secretary's speech was sympathetic as well as firm.

*MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, that he had a lively recollection of other cases of a similar kind, in connection with which attempts to invoke the intervention of that House had not ended more satisfactorily than the present attempt. He remembered specially one case in which not only was an appeal made to passion and prejudice in that House, but in which the appeal was carried even to the platform. He adopted the doctrine laid down by both the right hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the inability of that House to judge these cases rightly. Those doctrines would be remembered as occasion might require.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he disagreed with the remarks of the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to their right to speak on these occasions. The Home Secretary was only human. If the right hon. Gentleman had a right to review the decision of a Judge and jury, surely the House of Commons had a right to review the conduct of the Home Secretary.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) called attention to the recent appointment of two Inspectors of Slate Quarries. The Home Secretary, he said, had selected two men whose experience was limited to the underground quarries in Merionethshire, and who had no experience of the open slate quarries of Carnarvonshire. In reply to questions, the right hon. Gentleman had said that one of these gentlemen, Mr. Williams, had some practical knowledge of open quarries. As a matter of fact, the only experience which Mr. Williams had of such quarries was such as he had obtained as a lad in splitting slates. But the knowledge required for splitting slates was very different from that required for blasting rock. The Home Secretary had made an attempt to show that the quarries in Merionethshire were not altogether underground, and he had said that Mr. Williams had had experience in the open quarries. But it was incontrovertible that the only experience he had ever had was that of picking up, when a lad, odd pieces of slate and splitting them into slates. The work of splitting the slates had no relation to the difficult and onerous duty of blasting down the rock, and it might as well be said that dealing with slates at a Pimlico wharf gave a practical experience of working in an open quarry. He had also to complain that the right hon. Gentleman in one of his replies rather misled the House, he believed unknowingly. He (Mr. Roberts), in a question he put to him the other day, in order to emphasise the force of his objection, asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the quarrymen in underground quarries in Merionethshire numbered only 4,200, whereas there were over 8,000 in the Carnarvonshire open quarries. The right hon. Gentleman said that that was so; that the number in Merionethshire was only 4,200, but he said that half of them worked above ground. That led the House to suppose that half the quarries in Merionethshire were open quarries. That was not so. Half the quarrymen were slate pickers, and in the only open quarry in Merionethshire not above 100 men were employed. The Home Secretary justified his refusal to appoint a man who had had equal experience of open quarries in Carnarvonshire by the contention that Mr. Williams, the gentleman appointed, had sufficient experience of open quarries, as he had delivered a course of lectures in geology. Never was a weaker reason given. The other reason was weaker still—that the gentleman appointed had written, or was engaged in writing, a treatise on slate quarries. The rustic mind was apt to regard with awe a man who had written a book, and the Home Office seemed to share that awe. But the Home Secretary must know that in the profession he adorned there were many men who had written books, but had never held a brief in their lives. He would point out that it was more difficult to ascertain impending dangers from landslips in connection with open quarries than it was in the case of underground quarries, and even experienced managers of open quarries had frequently to call in assistance. To judge of danger in open quarries required the greatest amount of practical experience. He did not object to Mr. Williams. He knew he was a cultivated man, a good geologist, and a scientific man, but the Home Secretary practically admitted that his practical knowledge was insufficient, because he appointed another man, who was a working quarryman, from Festiniog, the very district where Mr. Williams himself was bred and born. The right hon. Gentleman ought to have appointed one Inspector for the Carnarvon district who had experience of open quarries, and one for Festiniog; and that both had been appointed from Festiniog was nothing less than a scandal. It was so felt in Carnarvon, and even in Festiniog it was considered a hardship and injustice to Carnarvonshire. He therefore moved to reduce the vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That £60,813 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Bryn Roberts.*)

*MR. ASQUITH: I can assure my hon. Friend that I have no particular awe or reverence for a person who has written a book. I never wrote a book myself, and I do not think the writing of a book is either a qualification or a disqualification for such offices as those to which my hon. Friend refers. The answer to my hon. Friend is very simple. I appointed these two Inspectors to meet the legitimate demand of the people of North Wales, and in making the appointment I did not have regard to any particular county. Of all the applications which were sent in to me I came to the conclusion that the two persons whom I appointed were the two persons best qualified to discharge the duty, both as regards open and as regards underground slate quarries. Mr. Williams has the double advantage of not only being a practical quarryman, trained and experienced in the work, but of having in his latter years acquired a considerable amount of scientific knowledge. He is a geologist of repute, and has devoted himself to the study of quarrying in all its branches, both in Wales and in other countries. This gentleman was strongly recommended from Carnarvonshire, and, if I do not mistake, by the hon. Member's own colleague in the representation of that county.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS did not say the appointment was not a good one. He believed Mr. Williams was a good Inspector, but his contention was that there ought to be an Inspector having a practical knowledge of the open quarry system in Carnarvonshire. In making this appointment, regard had been paid only to the slate quarries of Merionethshire.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he wished to call attention to an answer the Home Secretary gave in the House the previous day in reply to a question put by the hon. Member for Oxford University with regard to the treatment of anarchists by this country. The right hon. Gentleman was asked whether foreign countries were not dissatisfied with the inaction of Her Majesty's Government and their refusal to pass special legislation dealing with anarchists. From the right hon Gentleman's answer the House would gather that no dissatisfaction was expressed abroad on this question. [MR. ASQUITH: No.] That was the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's answer. He merely wished to say that anyone who had taken note of the expression of opinion by the foreign Press and by speakers in foreign Legislatures, would have realised that the very greatest dissatisfaction had been expressed abroad at the inaction of Her Majesty's Government. The feeling which prevailed universally abroad with regard to their inaction could be best described in the following sentence from the *Journal des Debats*—

> "All other Governments have done their duty. Unhappily, British optimism makes their task more difficult, inasmuch as the anarchists have full liberty in London to prepare their outrages."

He asked the Home Secretary whether it was true, as stated in the Press, that a large number of foreign anarchists who had been deported from their own countries had lately arrived in this country?

*Mr. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): Perhaps, before my right hon. Friend replies to the hon. Member for Sheffield, I may ask him another question on the same subject. The hon. Member referred to the necessity of special legislation in regard to anarchists. I should like to ask my right hon. Friend whether the most valuable piece of legislation against anarchists was not the Explosive Substances Act, which was carried through this House in 1883 by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer and resolutely and bitterly opposed by Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords?

Mr. ASQUITH: I believe the statement of my hon. Friend is perfectly accurate. With reference to the question put by the hon. Gentleman opposite, I have to say we are not in the habit in this country of regulating our policy according to the irresponsible utterances of foreign journalists; and, so far as I know, there is no foundation for the statement as to which he asks me a question.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he had intended to ask for some information with regard to the scale of fees on the appointment of Magistrates. As he did not desire to delay the Vote, he would do it on the Report stage, and, perhaps, by that time the Home Secretary would have found out he did write a book and that it was well worth the money.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

10. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £40,696, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

*Sir C. W. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) said, there were several matters which presented themselves for consideration on this Vote which there was no other opportunity of properly considering. Among these were one or two relating to Africa which arose only on this Vote, and did not arise on Class V., where some other subjects relating to Africa could be properly discussed. It was not his intention to place before the Committee any statement on the subject of the Congo negotiations which had been brought to a close by the Treaty between France and the Congo State, an account of which appeared in the newspapers a day or two ago. But not holding the views upon the subject matter of annexation which were popular in that House, he felt it was rather for those who held stronger views than he did himself to bring that matter before the House. He could not, however, avoid saying, and he thought the Committee generally would feel, that a great mistake was made in the hurried manner in which the Congo Treaty was concluded by Her Majesty's Government. Whatever view they held as regarded African annexation, they could not have failed to see that an arrangement which united France and Germany in opposition, as it were, to us was a very unwise arrangement for this country, and he regretted that such an arrangement should have been come to by Her Majesty's Government. He should like to call the attention of the Committee to an African subject—he meant the territory of the Niger Chartered Company—which they had no opportunity of mentioning on any other Vote on the Estimates, because there was no charge for any salary in connection with these territories, and it did not arise, therefore, in Class V. at all. The Charters of the Chartered Companies which had been granted at various times by Her Majesty's Government were four in number, of which three were African. The first two of these Charters of modern times which were granted by the Government were granted by a Liberal Administration and the last two by a Conservative Administration. Both great Parties, therefore, had united in this modern policy of granting Charters. The first was the Charter of the Borneo Company, which was discussed in the House and in regard to which there was a good deal of opposition on the Conservative side. It was provided, largely in consequence of the objections which were raised in regard to that Charter, that very full information should be given from time to time to the Government. What he had to allege with regard to the Niger Charter—the second of these charters granted, and also granted by Mr. Gladstone's Administration—was that the House and the country were left in total ignorance of the proceedings of that Company, and so far as they had been able to gather any information with regard to its proceedings that information was of a character to make them somewhat anxious and alarm them as to both what might be called the domestic and the foreign affairs of that Company. He had complained previously in the House that as to the territories which were administered, whether by Charter or protectorate, under the Foreign Office, they did not give so much information to this House, and were not, he feared, governed on so good a system as those which were administered through the Colonial Office. The Colonial Office was naturally more in the habit of dealing with territories of this kind than the Foreign Office, and he feared they were departing considerably from what had been the past and should be the present policy of the country by allowing territories of this kind to be permanently administered, although they were *quasi-*colonies, through the Foreign Office. With regard to the Niger Company, of which he was specially complaining at the present moment, they were really in total want of information as to the proceedings of that Company, and the statements which the Company themselves placed in the hands of the shareholders were meagre in the extreme, and unsatisfactory as far as they went. There was a good deal of evidence to show that there was much hypocrisy about their proceedings in Africa in connection with the Chartered Companies and their relations to the natives. We were parties to agreements between European Powers which were founded on a desire to put down slavery and the Slave Trade, the sale of drink, and the purchase of arms and gunpowder, and there was a great deal of reason to believe that we ourselves, and other countries also, were violating those provisions to which we had put our hands. In this particular case of the Niger Company there was much evidence to show that the Company got a large portion of its revenue from the sale of drink and in defiance of the principles to which this country had put its hand. They had no opportunity, except on this Vote, of scrutinising the proceedings of the Company. There was no salary paid in connection with it, and it could only be discussed because of the connection of the Foreign Office with it. When they went into the Berlin Agreement it was in the name of philanthropy and for the purpose largely of putting down the sale of drink, and of arms and gunpowder to the natives of Africa. He was bound to say he believed they might have done better if they had left Portugal in possession of the large portion of the West Coast of Africa over which she formerly exercised a certain sway, and which they intended to recognise by the Treaty which was made between this country and Portugal, but never ratified on account of the objections taken to it. If they had had a weaker Power there, coming under new engagements to themselves to which they should have been able to keep that Power, he thought they would have done better in the interests of the natives than they had through a Chartered Company of their own. One of the highest authorities on Africa, Mr. Silva White, the Secretary to the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, had written perhaps the best, or one of the best, books upon the position of Africa and the recent arrangements there. Mr. Silva White had quoted another book called *Christianity, Islam, and the Negro Race*, written by a man who was a negro, a statesman, a scholar, and a Christian, who had said this with regard to our proceedings on the West Coast of Africa—

> "Islam is still the most intelligent force in Africa, and it sees Christian Europe preaching its noble doctrine, but practising the reverse of it, by conniving at slavery while pretending to suppress it, and by introducing the accursed traffic in gin and gunpowder. He sees Islam preaching temperance and practising it. He sees Europeans sinking to the level of the natives and Mahommedans, raising the latter up to their own level."

That is what Mr. Silva White said briefly with regard to the proceedings of this country, and generally of their proceedings on the West Coast, and Mr. Silva White himself said that the gin trade was now associated in the native mind with Christianity. The Royal Niger Company was a monopolist. Formerly there were a large number of Liverpool traders and native traders on the river, but they had all been bought up. Nobody was now navigating the river except the Company, and even the missionaries for a long time were not allowed to navigate it. Such a monoply as this, he thought, ought to lead to the annual presentation to Parliament of very full accounts. Members ought to know exactly what was being done by such a Company under such conditions. The accounts laid before the shareholders of the Company at the meetings threw very little light upon their proceedings, as all the large items, such as the sale of gunpowder, the sale of drink, and the sale of arms were muddled up together, so that no information could be extracted from them. From all he could hear, there was practically no law administered by the Company except in one spot, and the officials in the interior were uncontrolled and could do absolutely as they pleased. There could be no doubt that a very large part of the Company's profits was derived from the sale of cheap German spirit. The Company posed before the world as philanthropists, because they were not selling spirits in a portion of their sphere of influence—that was to say, in the upper portion of the Niger. The reason was that the whole of the population there was Mahommedan, and that they would not allow the sale of drink amongst them. In the lower portion of the river it seemed to him that the Company pushed the sale of drink in every way they could. They flooded the lower portion of the river with spirits; they imported as many cheap muskets as they could, and they sold these guns and gunpowder to the natives. Slavery continued to exist throughout the Company's sphere exactly as it existed before the Company went there. One of the difficulties in dealing at the Foreign Office with Chartered Companies was that the Foreign Office did not put down slavery as the Colonial Office did. The Company at its meeting this year showed a profit of £70,000 on the credit side, and a 6 per cent. dividend. Of course, as long as this dividend was paid, the shareholders did not ask questions; but they posed as philanthropists, because they said that these commercial results were obtained, notwithstanding the restriction of the liquor traffic, and that the liquor traffic did not in the case of the Company, as it did in the case of other colonies, form the main staple of revenue. He thought this statement was far from the truth. There was another matter of the deepest importance he wished to refer to—namely, the *Costa Rica Packet* case. This was a case in which compensation had been asked for against the Dutch Government on behalf of New South Wales, and the New South Wales Assembly had taken the matter up very strongly indeed. Her Majesty's Government had admitted the strength of the claim, and had insisted upon compensation being paid by the Dutch Government to the captain of the ship that was seized. The Government had stated that in their opinion very great carelessness had been shown by the representatives of the Dutch Government, and they had pressed the Dutch Government for compensation amounting to £2,500. Considerable delay had occurred, and he thought Her Majesty's Government ought not to permit any further delay. The case was exciting very strong feeling indeed, not in New South Wales alone, but throughout the Australian Colonies, and it seemed to him that the Government ought to press very strongly for the immediate payment of the money. There was one other matter which he had no doubt would be dealt with abundantly by other speakers—namely, the Papers that came out yesterday with regard to affairs in Siam. These Papers had reference to an early period, and did not bring affairs down to the present time. The attitude taken up by the Government in the early stages of the negotiations was satisfactory, but the matter could not rest where it was. Information must be given to bring the position down to within the past few months.

Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) said, he agreed with the right hon. Baronet in his final observations on the subject of Siam. A group of Papers dealing with the matter had only reached him that morning, and he had not been able to give that elaborate study to them which he should feel it right to give before attempting to offer a decided opinion as to their contents. The latest Despatch brought the record down no further than April 25. Considering that from that time onwards the hon. Member for Southport (Mr. Curzon), and himself, and others had frequently pressed the Government to produce these Papers; and considering that they had been told over and over again that the Papers could not be presented until the whole matter was completed, it certainly was rather astonishing to find now that in the opinion of the Government the whole matter was sufficiently completed on the 25th of April. If the matter was completed at that time, surely they should have had the Papers a good deal earlier. At all events, they should have had them in May. It could not have taken May, June, July, and part of August to prepare these Papers for presentation to Parliament. He did not intend to blame the action of the Foreign Office in the matter of these Siamese negotiations. He must confess that it did not seem to him, on the whole, a satisfactory story so far as he had been able to study the Blue Book. The Blue Book opened with the statement of the French Ambassador that the French did not desire to go to Luang Probang, and it closed with the statement that Siam had lost the whole of the east bank of the Me-Kong, and 25 kilomètres of the west bank, and the military control over her own lakes and rivers in two of her richest provinces; that she had had to pay a large sum in indemnity, and that she still found herself with the French forces occupying an important town not very far distant, though not connected with that portion of the country originally in dispute between France and Siam. After that statement, which he believed to be perfectly correct, he could not say that the Blue Book disclosed a satisfactory story. There were one or two matters on which he desired to ask the hon. Gentleman opposite a few questions. He had put questions once or twice during the Session for information as to the progress of the arbitration with the Portuguese Government for the delimitation of the Manica plateau. He understood that arrangements had been made for the submission to arbitration of the matters in dispute, and he should like to know how the matter was advancing—whether the terms of the arbitration had yet been agreed on, and if the Arbitrators had yet been appointed? With regard to alien Anarchists, he would ask if it would not be possible to obtain from Foreign States in Europe a statement of the laws enforced in their respective States for dealing summarily with these persons? In the discussions which must take place in the recess, and which would possibly be renewed during next Session, it would be very desirable to have a clear and accurate statement of the actual laws in force. This information could be obtained by means of a Circular to all our Missions abroad. As to the Uganda railway—a subject to which he was sorry to have to again revert this Session—he did not suppose the Committee would desire to have an elaborate discussion on it, but he could hardly let the opportunity pass without saying again how important it was that the Government should arrive as soon as possible at a decision. He could not believe that there would be any difficulty in finding financiers who would be ready to supply the means if a guarantee of interest covering a certain number of years were given by the Government, as had been done over and over again in the matter of Indian railways and railways in South Africa. It must be remembered that Uganda was three months' march from our base, and from a military point of view alone this country might find itself in straits if it was called upon to suddenly reinforce the small contingent of troops in Uganda at short notice. We lost Khartoum and the Soudan because of the non-existence of the Suakin-Berber railway. He did not say that the whole distance from the sea to Uganda should be covered by a railway at once, but a portion of this railway at least should be made to Uganda, in order to guard against a gigantic disaster and to facilitate transport in the event of an emergency. He would fortify himself by quoting the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who could not be accused of any partiality for Uganda or the Uganda railway. On the last occasion on which they discussed the subject this significant phrase fell from the hon. Member—

> "Without a railway our annexation of Uganda is criminal folly, and contrary to the first elements of military strategy."

This was a view which he thought should commend itself to the Committee. They might be right or they might be wrong in proclaiming a protectorate over Uganda. That was past, and done, and settled. But now that we were there, surely it became our duty to put ourselves, in relation to that country, in such a position that our communications might be cheapened and more rapidly effected. And it should be borne in mind that the first portion of the journey towards Uganda, which was the most difficult portion for porters, was at the same time the easiest for a railway to travel. The country was extremely flat, and very few bridges would be required. It was a waterless district, and by that reason an unhealthy district. Until the higher ground was reached it was, of course, difficult and arduous, and expensive for human porterage to travel. He did not want to labour the question further—indeed, he had gone further into it than he had intended, not desiring to raise a discussion. He only wanted to say that if Her Majesty's Government could see their way to taking, at all events, some steps towards what seemed to him the natural sequel to the position they had assumed, he could assure them, on behalf of the Opposition, they would meet with nothing but support at their hands. Now he came to an important question, and that was the position in which we found ourselves in the face of the Treaty which had been entered into between the Congo State and France. Here he desired to associate himself completely with what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet. He could not help thinking that our Treaty with the King of the Belgians as King of the Congo State had had several holes knocked in it. The German Government had knocked one hole in it, and now the French Government had knocked another. There was little more remaining than there was of the paper circle in a circus through which the columbine had first jumped and had been followed by the clown. The French Government did not seem to him to have had a victory all along the line. On the contrary, they seemed to have given their position away. As he understood, France had taken exception to the Treaty of this country with the Congo on the ground that the Congo State had no right to go beyond the limits of territory assigned at the time of the European Congress by which the Congo State was built up. But the French Government had now by this Treaty acknowledged that the northern limit of the Congo State extended considerably beyond the fifth degree north. The French Government had also maintained that the Congo State had no right to take a lease of territory at all, though they had admitted now in the Treaty the right of the Congo State to take on lease that portion of territory which this country had leased to them which ran down to Lake Albert. By this agreement France permitted the very thing to be done that she herself took exception to a short time ago. But the more important point to consider was where they found themselves at the present time in connection with this matter. How about that portion of the map recently circulated and coloured a dark brown—that portion leased to the Congo Free State, and the lease of which the Congo Free State had now undertaken not to carry out? He took it that our right to deal with that portion of the territory was not affected by that Treaty. The right of the Congo Free State to exercise authority in that district had been recognised by the action of the Congo State itself; but our sovereign rights, so far as they existed as sovereign rights, had not been touched in any degree. That claim, as he had said before, had been known to all those who had any interests in that portion of the country; that claim was made as long ago as July, 1890, and it had been recognised by Germany and Italy; it had been recognised——

An hon. **MEMBER**: The sovereign rights?

MR. J. W. LOWTHER: No, not the sovereign rights, but that claim to include that portion in our sphere of influence had been recognised by Germany, by Italy, and, by the agreement of the 12th of May, had been recognised by the Congo Free State itself, though by a subsequent agreement they had passed a sort of self-denying ordinance by which they undertook not to exercise rights which they undoubtedly possessed in that district. That was the present position of affairs, and he could hardly believe it possible that a friendly nation should think for a moment of sending into a district where our rights and claims were known and recognised by two of the great Powers of Europe and by the neighbouring Power of the Congo Free State—he could hardly believe it possible that in a time of profound peace a friendly Power should send an armed force into the territory. He knew that some people resented the vicinity of a large French force, but he could hardly believe that in a time of profound peace a friendly Power would take such action as that; but, at the same time, they must remember the doctrine had been laid down of what was called effective occupation, and that it would become necessary before very long—to use a rather American slang phrase—to implement our rights in that district; and he would, therefore, not with the view of embarrassing the Government in any way, but with a view of obtaining information on the matter, ask his hon. Friend opposite whether he could give any indication of the decision of the Government as to how they proposed to implement the rights they claimed in that district, which they claimed four years ago and which had been admitted? He desired also to ask a question of the hon. Gentleman opposite with regard to Samoa. The civil war—for he supposed it was a civil war—that was going on there had been dragging its slow length along now for some considerable time, and if one was to judge by the telegrams one saw in the newspapers all agricultural progress—in fact, all cultivation of the soil—seemed to be at a standstill. If that state of matters was continued in Samoa it must lead to financial disaster and the ruin of that country. Were they at the present time negotiating with the Government of the United States as to the revision of the Samoan Act, and had any arrangement or agreement yet been arrived at in this matter? If so, he should be glad if the hon. Gentleman could inform him what that agreement or arrangement might be.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) said, he had not intended to take part in the Debate, and he only rose to support the criticism that had been passed on the Government regarding the construction of a railway in Uganda. They must recollect that the Government—he admitted, another Government, but one representing this country in 1891—gave the East Africa Company an indication that the construction of such a railway would be countenanced——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Gentleman there is a Vote on the subject in Class I., and, therefore, it would not be in Order to discuss it upon this Vote.

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (Sir E. GREY, Northumberland, Berwick) said, perhaps it would simplify matters if he dealt with the points that had been already raised. He dared say some hon. Members had it in their minds to deal with some of these points, but he had better at once let the Committee know how much it was possible for him to say. First of all, he would take the Niger Company. No doubt the extension of Imperial territories by Chartered Companies was, theoretically, a very anomalous procedure, but it was one that had been well-known to this country for many generations, and one that in some instances had been eminently successful; in regard to many anomalous things it seemed to be part of the British character to get very good work out of them. At the same time, he should be the last to deny that there were inconveniences which were inseparable from the action of Chartered Companies. In granting Charters they were bound to give a Company more or less a free hand, and in giving a free hand they ran a certain risk of Imperial responsibility being incurred, indirectly in the first place, and directly afterwards. They had a Chartered Company on the East Coast of Africa which had failed to pay a dividend, and which had to withdraw from a great part of the territory which it at first occupied, and which, on that ground, had been subjected to considerable censure in this House. But, on the other hand, on the West Coast of Africa they had this Niger Company, where the results had been exactly opposite, and yet it, too, was blamed. The Niger Company occupied the territory, and there was a time when, if the Niger Company had not occupied the country, a good deal of the trade might have been lost to this country. The Niger Company paid a dividend; but no doubt, owing to its strength and its success, it had got the whole trade of that district into its own hands, and, being successful, it had raised up in this country certain rivals who were unfriendly to it. They ought to remember that attacks were sure to be made, not on account of any failure or misconduct on the part of the Company, but, to a certain extent, on account of the very success of the Niger Company. Certain supervision was exercised by the Foreign Office, and had been exercised largely in fixing the amount of duties, and under the Charter, or rather, in face of the fact that the Niger Company could not be said to have violated its Charter, he should not think they could call upon it to be bound by conditions that were not contained in the Charter.

SIR C. W. DILKE : Under its Charter it has to present accounts to the Foreign Office.

SIR E. GREY : Yes ; but it has complied with that.

SIR C. W. DILKE : I presume the Foreign Office could give those ?

SIR E. GREY said, the Company could not bind itself to publish a full statement of its trade every year to the House. With regard to the sale of powder and guns, the sale of powder was allowed in certain districts, and as to the sale of guns, they were flint-lock guns, which he did not think could do any serious harm in these parts of Africa. Only the other day he read of a case in which there was a complaint of the sale of powder, but in that particular district the natives had suffered severely through the ravages of lions ; therefore he thought that in a country such as Africa was, where the natives were exposed to these dangers, the sale of flint-lock guns was not a thing of which there should be any great complaint. As to the Revenue, to a great extent that, no doubt, was derived from the liquor traffic, but how much of the Revenue at home was derived from the liquor traffic ? If they were to have trade in any country where duties were imposed, as a Free Trade country they ought to see that such things as liquor should be taxed, and therefore it must be from that that a great portion of the revenue was derived. As to the proportion the drink traffic in the Niger Company's territories bore to the whole trade, spirits were 12 per cent., guns and powder 7 per cent., and the cotton and silk goods were 8 per cent. And, further, it appeared, the trade in these particular articles was not increasing, but with regard to the liquor the Company made out that the average for the last seven years would be about the average of that trade at the present time. That statement of the Company gave rise to certain criticisms out-of-doors which he explained at the time, and would not, therefore, go into now ; but he was thoroughly convinced the criticisms made on that statement were inspired rather by a desire to criticise than a knowledge of the actual facts. He would like to deal with the question of slavery for a moment. No doubt it was the case that in some Protectorates in different parts of the world under the Colonial Office the Slave Trade, or rather slavery, was entirely put down ; but he did not know the actual facts of the case, as it occurred a good many years ago, and he should first like to know what the institution of slavery was and the conditions of the particular Protectorates in which it was put down, but the principle appeared to have been that the protecting Power, as far as possible, allowed the law and institutions of the Protectorate to go on. In many cases under our supervision regulations had been made by which it was believed the trade must be suppressed in the course of a few years. The institution of slavery could not at first be interfered with without perverting the whole social arrangements of a country ; therefore they had confined their efforts to putting down the slave trade in the belief that if that was done effectively the institution of slavery itself must in the course of a limited number of years die a gradual and natural death. As to the *Costa Rica Packet* case, the right hon. Baronet had given a perfectly accurate history of that, and the amount of the demand made originally on the Dutch Government. That demand was made under the impression that it was a moderate demand, and one that ought to be quickly complied with. That demand, he regretted to say, had not been complied with, and the right hon. Baronet made a good point when he said that the lapse of time that had taken place in meeting our demands on behalf of the captain of the *Costa Rica Packet* was an element that had to be taken into account in estimating the hardship that had been suffered. When the Government received from the Dutch Government a proposal to refer the matter to arbitration they were not willing to do so without considering very carefully the principles on which the arbitration was to proceed. The matter had been referred to the Law Officers, and their advice could not be long delayed. As to the

Manica plateau arbitration, a very distinguished Italian gentleman had been accepted by both parties as arbitrator, but how soon the proceedings would commence he could not say. There had been no hitch, and there was no reason to suppose that there would be any difficulty in the matter. With regard to the question that had been put to him as to the possibility of making a collection of the laws of different foreign countries relating to anarchists, he thought that the proposal was a very reasonable one, and he would see how far the suggestion could be carried into effect. The question of Samoa remained exactly in the same position that it had been in for some time, and it was not a satisfactory position. There had been continual troubles amongst the natives, as the hon. Member had stated; but at the present time no negotiations were going on for a revision of the provisions of the Act, an Act which it was generally admitted had not hitherto worked satisfactorily. He did not know whether at the present moment he was precluded from touching upon the question of Uganda, but he might at all events say he had no new announcement to make with regard to the railway. He would now pass to the only two questions that remained. The most important question of the whole was the question of Siam, and upon that he did not propose to say much, because it had been dealt with once already this Session, and was also dealt with at some length in the Blue Book which had been issued, and which he thought told its own story very clearly, and pointed its own moral. The story undoubtedly was that differences and difficulties arose between the French and the Siamese Governments which were confined in their origin to the far side of the Mekong, and as long as they were confined to that district British interests would not be affected in such a manner as to justify the British Government in interfering. The great object of the Blue Book was to bring out clearly that the British Government had all through been perfectly plain in saying that British interests were directly affected by the maintenance of the independence and integrity of the Kingdom of Siam. So far the British Government had been most careful and considerate to give no cause of offence and to create no irritation where British interests were not directly affected, but, should a new phase of things arise in the relations between Siam and the French Government, it might be that the British Government would have to take up the negotiations at the point where they had been left, and the course they would pursue would not be the same they had felt justified in pursuing in the past. It was quite true the last Paper was issued in April, but no new phase had been entered upon since then. As to pending questions between ourselves and the French Government in Africa, it was most desirable that they should not be left open. The true policy and desire, he believed, should be that each nation in its own sphere of influence should be at leisure undisturbed to develop its trade and consolidate its relations with the natives in a natural and orderly manner. He would be the last to underestimate the danger, not active but latent, in the present condition of affairs, but he believed that they had reached a stage where there was a better prospect than there had been for some time past of the various questions being adjusted between the two nations, provided there were exercised a little goodwill and a moderate amount of give and take on both sides.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he thought the Committee would agree that owing to the absorption of the whole time of the House by the Government they had been deprived of those opportunities, to which they were fully entitled, of bringing forward these important matters for discussion. He would congratulate the right hon. Baronet (Sir E. Grey) upon the concluding portion of his statement with regard to Siam. He was glad to hear from him a very distinct and firm expression of opinion that the time had come when further encroachments on the independence of Siam would not be permitted by Great Britain. The Ministry could not complain of a want of toleration on the part of the Opposition. Thirteen months ago this question of Siam was first raised. The Opposition then thought that the Government was dealing with the matter in a casual and lax manner, and that the ultimate result would be trouble between the two countries. He trusted that danger had passed away, but he protested against the hon. Baronet and the Government still venturing to speak of maintaining the integrity of Siam when they knew that Siam had in the last year been despoiled of one-third of her territory amounting to some 600,000 square miles, that her practical control over Battambong and Angkor had been taken away, and that the important Port of Chantabun was still occupied by the French. Before he said anything about the Congo Treaty he wished to repudiate any notion that he was actuated by a spirit of hostility to the French or to the French people. In his belief the French had every right to pursue an active colonial and Imperial policy, and he had never said anything which could be construed as offensive to France or to Frenchmen. His complaint was not against France, but against Her Majesty's Government. As the French were justified in pursuing an active colonial policy, so Her Majesty's Government were bound to protect British interests. The Government seemed to think that a course of successive retreats—first, small retreats, and then greater surrenders—apologetic statements in the House of Commons, and feeble notes to the French Government would preserve peace and avert war or trouble between the two countries. He maintained that the policy which would avoid disturbance, trouble, and war was that of fixing, at an early stage, a definite point with courtesy and discretion, and letting foreign countries know that any passing beyond that point was likely to lead to resistance on the part of Great Britain. But the policy pursued by Great Britain was essentially different. What had happened with regard to the Anglo-Congo Treaty on May 12th? He supposed that no British Government had ever had such a humiliating experience as the present Government had had with respect to this Treaty. That Treaty was unfortunately made by the present Government without consulting the other great Powers interested, and even without endeavouring to find out what their views were. The notion of the British Government was to create a buffer State between the Nile waterway and the French forces that were advancing from Central Africa towards the Nile. That policy had failed abjectly. The Treaty had been torn to shreds by Germany and France. The frontier of the Congo Free State had actually been put back five degrees by the new Franco-Congo Agreement, Article III. of the Treaty of May 12, which gave us a strip of territory between Lake Albert Nyanza and Lake Tanganyika, had been promptly cancelled at the demand of the German Government. And Article II. was practically abrogated by the Franco-Congo Agreement of this month. Under Article II. Great Britain had leased to the Congo State the whole of the western basin of the Nile, from Lado up to Fashoda, or to about latitude 11, and westwards as far as the 25th degree of longitude. That lease was with a view to keeping France out of the basin of the Nile. Now the French Government had driven the Congo State into abandoning most of that territory. The French had pushed the Congo territory southwards from latitude 11 to latitude 5·30, and eastwards from longitude 25 to longitude 30. That was to say, they had taken from the Congo State over 10,000 square miles of leased territory, and had driven back the Congo State frontier to within 40 miles of the Nile. The really important issue was the effective occupation of the western basin of the Nile. The frontier of the Congo Free State had actually been pushed back from the 25th to the 30th degree, now fixed by the Franco-Congo Agreement of August 14. But it did not much matter what the latitude of the frontier was. The important point was that there should be no French occupation of the western basin of the Nile. It was admitted by all Military Authorities in Europe that, if a great European Power occupied almost any portion of the Upper Nile waterway, such a Power must ultimately control Egypt. A leading officer said the other day that if he were the Mahdi he would charge Egypt a good price for every quart of water that ran down the Nile. Any great Power occupying the waterway would be able to do that, and so to accomplish the subjugation or the ruin of Egypt. He could quote Sir Samuel Baker and General Gordon in support of the view that any great Power who got occupation of the upper portion of the Nile waterway could control Egypt. The important question at issue, therefore, was how far the effective occupation of the French would be kept from the Nile waterway. Upon this they had no assurance whatever from the Government. If the French Government would give an undertaking that their forces would not approach within 400, or even 300, miles from the Nile waterway, that would be a satisfactory arrangement. But until we had this undertaking, there was every risk of a steady advance of the French forces towards the Nile. There could be no doubt that the French were steadily working for the accomplishment of their great ambition—the establishment of a French Trans-African Empire from Senegambia and the Atlantic on the west to Obock and the Red Sea on the east. Such an achievement would render our occupation of Egypt impossible, and would turn the Mediterranean into a French lake. It would also put an end to the brilliant promise of a British Trans-African Empire from Alexandria on the north to Cape Town on the south. Much had been done of late to achieve this. Uganda was the key of the whole position, and Uganda was now British. Let the Government be vigilant and resolute and they would win most splendid territories in Central Africa for British commerce and colonisation. He now wished to ask the hon. Gentleman a question with regard to the collision between French and British troops near Waima in December last. This was a striking illustration of the mistake made in keeping these questions so long open. He agreed with the Under Secretary that it was a mistake, but he accused the Government of being responsible for keeping the matter open so long. In December last a British force on British territory was attacked by a French force. They believed the attack was owing to a mistake on the part of the French officer in command, who paid forfeit with his life. But three English officers were killed, two of them officers of much promise. Yet nine months had elapsed, and the matter was still left open between the two Governments, and he submitted that if the Government had done their duty in this question the matter would long since have been settled. Then six native police in the British Service were shot down near the Niger territory not more than three or four months ago, and no reparation had been made. Whether they looked at Siam, Sierra Leone, the Niger, the Congo, or the western basin of the Nile, they saw British interests being steadily infringed upon by the extraordinary activity of the French. He did not blame France for that. The French were entitled to as much territory as they could get and keep. But they had a right to demand of the Government that they should realise the importance of the interests they had to defend, and take steps to prevent any further encroachments upon British rights in South Africa. They knew that the French had great colonial aims. Nobody who had noticed the recent advance of the French from West to East would deny that they were imbued with the idea of obtaining a great colonial dominion. This was no fantastic dream, but the policy of leading French statesmen. The French forces had been advancing of late with giant strides towards the accomplishment of this scheme. With regard to Uganda, again, there was the issue as to which country would control these regions of great promise and natural wealth, affording splendid opportunities for colonisation enterprises. The present and essential duty of the Government was to take steps to prevent further infringement on British interests in Africa, and particularly to prevent an effective French occupation of the Nile waterway or of the adjacent territories.

Sir R. TEMPLE said, he desired to draw the attention of the Committee to the practical lessons which he gathered from the Siamese movement. The Papers on the subject raised many points regarding the proceedings of our Secretaries of State. The correspondence, which was somewhat complex, was ably summarised in a Despatch by Lord Rosebery to Lord Dufferin, of December 1893, and was to be found in No. 309, page 148, and hon. Members might be sure that this Despatch of the Prime Minister contained all that was essential in the history of the negotiations. In this Despatch were to be found many of the original proposals made so far back as 1889. The lesson to be learned from what had taken place was that if long ago we had expressed strong views with regard to British interests, the whole of the trouble that had occurred might have been averted. The change of Government that took place in 1892 was very unfortunate, because that was the critical period of the negotiations. It was during the interval between the active life of the outgoing Government and the active life of the succeeding Government that matters took an alarming development. It was apparent from Lord Rosebery's Despatch that statements made by British Ministers were misunderstood by the French. Those statements were taken by the French to amount to a declaration that England had no concern in the quarrel between France and Siam. The fact was, that when our Ministers said that we were not concerned in the quarrel they did not realise its nature and thought that it arose out of disputes respecting comparatively remote regions of Siam, and did not relate to the important parts of the country. The result was, that the French thought that they were at liberty to "go ahead." British diplomatists, when dealing with an ambitious Power like France, ought to be very careful not to say anything that could be misunderstood, and it was very unfortunate that stronger and more positive language was not used. The conduct of France was only too clear. First they begun with a frontier policy, and then there came not only all the annexations that had been made, but a proposal for a still further partition of Siam. There was no doubt that the French Minister did give very positive promises on behalf of his Government, with regard to evacuation of the harbour of Chantabun, and it was high time that the fulfilment of those promises should be claimed, because if they were not fulfilled, that state of things would arise of which the hon. Baronet had spoken—a new phase would have arisen with which the British Government would have to deal. Depend upon it, that if Chantabun was not evacuated by the French, then British interests in Siam would be seriously imperilled. It was, therefore, high time that the British Government should put its foot down, and claim the fulfilment of the promises of the French Government with regard to Siam. He wished to know whether the British Government was or was not going to claim from France an arrangement which would ensure the integrity, not of Siam, but of what remained of Siam. On that all-important question no light was thrown by the Blue Books. As one who knew something of Eastern affairs, he strongly urged on the Government to claim from France the fulfilment of the undertaking it had given with regard to Siam; for until that was done, the integrity of Siam and British interests in Siam would be seriously imperilled.

Sir R. Temple

Dr. CLARK asked whether it was the intention of the Government to report Progress after this Vote?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER: We propose to take some non-contentious Votes as well; but we will not take any more contentious Votes to-night.

Commander BETHELL said, he earnestly hoped that the prospect which the hon. Baronet had mentioned of some arrangement being come to with France would develop into a satisfactory result. He would also urge on the hon. Baronet the necessity, if possible, of coming to some terms with the British East Africa Company. He was quite sure that if the Foreign Secretary would meet the Directors of the Company and talk the matter over, it would be quite possible to come to terms mutually satisfactory and honourable to both parties. The present state of affairs was most discreditable, and amounted to something like a public scandal. He trusted that in the interest of the country it would be put an end to at once.

*Mr. WEIR was surprised that the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield had left out of consideration in his speech his earlier love — Brazil. The hon. Baronet the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs had said that the proportion the drink traffic in the Niger Company's territory bore to the whole trade was that spirits were 12 per cent., guns and powder 7 per cent., and the cotton and silk goods and other articles 81 per cent.; and he added the trade in drink did not appear to be increasing. He regretted that the hon. Baronet should have made so little of the 12 per cent. derivable from alcohol. He was informed that the natives were becoming utterly demoralised from drinking bad brandy; and he thought that whatever drink they got it should at least be good and unadulterated.

*Sir E. GREY said, he did not underrate the importance of coming to a settlement with the East Africa Company, but he had nothing to add to what he had said on that subject on the Vote on Account. It was said that during the revolution at Brazil British ships were refused protection at Rio to enable them to get provisions absolutely necessary for the crews. These statements were founded only on exaggerated newspaper reports. He saw one of those reports, which stated that owing to the want of British support given to a British vessel to obtain a supply of water, the vessel had to apply to the American warships for assistance. What actually happened was that the British vessel was, on application, promised protection by the British authorities to go to the proper place to get a proper water supply; but being in a hurry, and unable to wait till morning, she applied to the American vessels for a supply of water, and they having a large supply very properly complied with the request. That was the only foundation for this charge that British vessels had not been afforded sufficient protection by the British authorities.

*Mr. TOMLINSON protested against the indifference which was shown by the Government in the loss of the lives of three British officers at Waima—a place which at the time was occupied by British forces. He should also strongly protest against a system under which the Representatives of the constituencies had to discuss those important and serious questions in an attenuated House at the close of a wearisome Session. One would think that when the Government were carrying on difficult and delicate negotiations with other Powers, they would desire to have a strong public opinion behind them. But the Government evidently had no such desire. Everything was kept in the dark so much as possible, and the House got no fair opportunity of expressing its feelings in the matter.

Question put, and agreed to.

11. £7,528, to complete the sum for Privy Council Office.

*Sir F. S. POWELL urged that the time had come when the quarantine system should be entirely abolished in this country. The quarantine system was ineffectual for its purpose and ought to be abolished. In the year 1892, when there was a terrible visitation of the cholera in Europe, it was kept away from this country not by quarantine, but by sanitary operations of a much simpler character. In the course of last year a Sanitary Convention was held at Dresden, attended by the Representatives of the European Powers—England included—and the result was that quarantine had almost disappeared from the European system. It continued still at Portsmouth, and he therefore should move to reduce this Vote by £1,400.

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, it was proposed, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, to discontinue this system of quarantine. Legislation, however, would be necessary before the change could be effected, and therefore they must take the Vote on the present occasion. He believed that next year they would not require a Vote for the purpose.

Vote agreed to.

12. £23,380, to complete the sum for Charity Commission.

13. £22,071, to complete the sum for Civil Service Commission.

14. £34,444, to complete the sum for Exchequer and Audit Department.

15. £4,186 (including a supplementary sum of £1,000), to complete the sum for Friendly Societies Registry.

16. £9,219, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, England.

17. £84, to complete the sum for the Mint, including Coinage.

18. £7,452, to complete the sum for National Debt Office.

19. £12,017, to complete the sum for Public Record Office.

20. £5,659, to complete the sum for Public Works Loan Commission.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

STATUTE LAW REVISION BILL [*Lords*].
(No. 354.)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, considered.

*Sir F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he desired to omit from "Section 10" to "Act" in the Schedule, page 15, line 52. It was his wish to move one or two

Amendments, and he thought he need scarcely apologise, because the delay which the Government had afforded him had been made use of by themselves, and they had themselves discovered defects in their own Bill. The Bill which they were now dealing with altered two previous Statute Law Revision Acts, and he thought these circumstances clearly proved that the delay had not been without benefit. He would point out what he thought, subject to higher opinion, were one or two defects. The first was on page 15, in the References to 14 & 15 Vic., c. 97. The Bill proposed to omit in the wording of Section 10, these words, "from and after the passing of this Act." He had examined that section several times himself, and an hon. and learned Friend had been again over the ground with him, and they could not find any such words as those in the section. It was clear that there was some error; and if the intention of the Government was to abolish Section 10, there was some error again, because Section 10 was the section which they required in all these cases to appoint new trustees, and if the power of appointing new trustees went, the whole clause relating to trustees became clearly imperfect and the scheme wholly failed. He was sure there was an error here, and the only course which he could suggest to the Government was that these references to the 14th & 15th Vict. c. 92, should be removed from the Bill altogether. He thought it was very dangerous to leave them as they were, because as they stood they were entirely wrong, and he believed it was necessary to make the alteration he had ventured to suggest.

Amendment proposed, Schedule, page 15, line 52, to leave out from the words "Section ten," to the word "Act."—(*Sir F. S. Powell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir J. RIGBY, Forfar) said, he had not had the opportunity of going through this, and in the circumstances it had been their course to leave out anything that was very doubtful. He therefore agreed to leave out the words from "Section 10" to "Act," as moved by the hon. Baronet.

Sir F. S. Powell

Question put, and negatived.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, the next Amendment which stood in his name, and which was to leave out "Section fourteen" to "Act," in page 15, line 53, of the Schedule, was really consequential upon the acceptance of his first Amendment.

Amendment proposed, Schedule, page 15, line 53, to leave out the words "Section fourteen," to the word "Act."—(*Sir F. S. Powell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR J. RIGBY said, he agreed that this was a purely consequential Amendment, and he accepted it.

Question put, and negatived.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, the next Amendment was to leave out "16 & 17 Vict. c. 134," at page 17, line 25, of the Schedule, to "were omitted," in line 28. This was really a matter of drafting, he thought, and if the Government thought it was not necessary he would not press it.

Amendment proposed, Schedule, page 17, line 25, to leave out "16 & 17 Vict. c. 134," to the words "were omitted," in line 28.—(*Sir F. S. Powell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR J. RIGBY said, he thought it was a mere matter of drafting, and that they must adhere to the words.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, in view of the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman he would not press it for a moment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he desired to move an Amendment on page 28 of the Schedule. He ought to apologise for not having placed the Amendment on the Paper, but he had not had an opportunity of doing so. The Act proposed to abolish Clauses, 3, 4, and 7 of the Bishopric of Truro Act. There was no doubt that in one aspect of these clauses they had a temporary character, but he maintained that though they had a temporary character, still they were also permanent in their nature, and should not be repealed.

Amendment proposed, in page 28, line 5, to leave out the words "sections three, four, and seven."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

SIR J. RIGBY said, the hon. Member was under a great misapprehension as to the meaning of these Acts. The object was to keep out of the Statute Book anything that was superfluous. It was impossible that any wrong should be done, because the repeals were in every case subject to very careful conditions, and there was no possible right or obligation that could be affected by the repeal which was made here. Again, the object was to get rid of those superfluous and unnecessary matters which had had their effect and been spent. In the case dealt with by these clauses, the money had been paid, and there could be no possible operation in time to come of these particular clauses.

MR. TOMLINSON: Money paid for endowments.

SIR J. RIGBY: That is so, no doubt, but every right is preserved here in the most ample manner. There are 600 or 700 Bills and Statutes dealt with here, and it is impossible for me from memory to speak positively of one taken out at random; but I can assure the hon. Gentleman that it is perfectly and absolutely impossible that any harm can be done, the reservation of rights in the Bill is so extensive. The rights of any new Bishopric cannot be affected. The rights are left exactly the same.

*SIR F. S. POWELL: We must be careful to see that no alteration is made affecting the working of the new Sees.

*SIR J. RIGBY: No substantial alteration of rights can take place.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*SIR F. S. POWELL said, they were now dealing with the whole of the shipping legislation, and it seemed to him a foolish thing that they should be passing a Bill abolishing all these old Statutes, and at the same time they should have this kind of abolition of one or two words only in this Bill. He appealed to the Government to cancel this reference to the Merchant Shipping Act. He begged to move the Amendment standing in his name.

Amendment proposed, Schedule, page 31, line 29, to leave out from the words "thirty-ninth and fortieth years of Victoria," to the words "seventy-six," in line 35, both inclusive.—(*Sir F. S. Powell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

*SIR J. RIGBY said, here again there was a misapprehension as to the meaning of these Acts. When that Bill to which the hon. Baronet referred passed into law and it became an Act the whole of these Acts dealing with Merchant Shipping would disappear from the Statute Book by virtue of express supercession. They had no right, at this stage, to assume that the Bill would pass into law. They did not know that it would pass, though they expected it very confidently to become an Act.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*MR. TOMLINSON said, he desired to move an Amendment on page 45, line 29, which he regretted he had not been able to place on the Paper, so that the learned Attorney General might have had an opportunity of considering it. The Amendment dealt with the Truro Chapter Act, 41 & 42 Vict. c. 44, s. 2, which referred to the transfer of a Canonry to the Archdeaconry of Exeter. The words of the section were—

> "The Canonry when vacant shall be annexed to the Archdeaconry of Exeter, and save as regards the change in favour of the Archdeaconry of Cornwall shall be subject to the same laws and customs, particularly those in respect of the income ceasing on the death of the Canon as the Canonry is subject to, which at the date of the vacancy is annexed to the Archdeaconry of Exeter."

He was of opinion that it was not desirable to repeal those provisions—"The Canonry when vacant shall be annexed to the Archdeaconry of Exeter." The annexation of the Canonry to the Archdeaconry of Exeter was a permanent change, and the recording Act should remain permanently on the Statute Book. It was not merely transitory in its nature. It gave legal effect to a transfer of ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Attorney

General would say that all rights under the Bill were preserved, but still he did claim that a permanent change in ecclesiastical jurisdiction which was legalised by Statute ought to remain on the Statute Book.

Amendment proposed, in page 45, line 29, to leave out the words "section two."

Question proposed, "That the words 'section two' stand part of the Bill."

SIR J. RIGBY said, that for some years past there had always been a note accompanying the Statute Law Revision Acts explaining the principle on which the Acts proceed in the case of Spent Acts. On page 4 there was the following note :—

> "Enactments spent or exhausted in operation by the accomplishment of the purposes for which they were passed, either at the moment of their first taking effect, or on the happening of some event, or on the doing of some Act authorised or required."

This Act was spent by the operation taking effect.

MR. TOMLINSON : But my objection is that it is not a spent clause.

SIR J. RIGBY : It is spent, if it operates at once.

MR. TOMLINSON : The operation is permanent.

Question put, and agreed to.

SIR J. RIGBY said, he hoped he would be allowed to take the Third Reading now.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Sir J. Rigby.*)

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) : On that question, Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Attorney General whether we may rely—we are at the end of the Session — upon the Amendments which have been made in the Bill being adhered to ?

SIR J. RIGBY : Certainly, Sir ; I have done nothing here except in consultation with those who will have charge of the Bill in another place.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

CHIMNEY SWEEPERS BILL.—(No. 277.)

Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith ; considered, and agreed to.

UNIFORMS BILL.—(No. 309.)

Lords Amendment to be considered forthwith ; considered, and agreed to.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1892-3.

Committee to consider the Savings and Deficiencies upon Navy and Army Grants for 1892-3, and the temporary sanction obtained from the Treasury by the Navy and Army Departments to the Expenditure not provided for in the Grants for that year, To-morrow.

Ordered, That the Appropriation Accounts for the Navy and Army Departments, which were presented upon the 15th day of February last, be referred to the Committee.—(*Sir John Hibbert.*)

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) [REDEMPTION].

Resolution reported ;

> "That it is expedient to authorise the Treasury to redeem their liability in respect of guaranteed dividend on the share capital of Tramway Companies in Ireland by payment of a capital sum, to authorise the National Debt Commissioners to advance the sum required, and to authorise the payment, out of moneys provided by Parliament for the Service of the Board of Works, or (if not so made) out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, of any terminable annuity created for the repayment of such advance in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to amend The Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883."

Resolution agreed to.

EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS.

Resolution reported ;

> "That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1893 was Rx.90,172,438 ; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against the Revenue was Rx.91,005,850 ; that there was an excess of Expenditure over Revenue of Rx.833,412 ; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways and Irrigation Works was Rx.3,986,290."

Resolution agreed to.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 16th August, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put till To-morrow.

House adjourned at a quarter
after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 18th August 1894.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LONDON STREETS AND BUILDINGS BILL (*by Order*).

Order for consideration of Lords' Amendments, read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Lords' Amendments be now considered."

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) rose to discuss some of the provisions of the Bill, when

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) rose to Order.

*__Mr. SPEAKER__: I rose at the same time as the hon. Member (Mr. Stuart) to point out that the hon. Member is not entitled to discuss the Bill. The Question before the House is that the Lords' Amendments be now considered, not that the Bill itself, as amended, be considered, and therefore it is not open to the hon. Member to discuss the provisions of the Bill.

*__Mr. WEIR__ said, that before the Bill was proceeded with copies of it in its amended form should be circulated. The Amendments were serious, and should be in the hands of Members before the Bill was passed.

Mr. J. STUART said, the Amendments had been circulated in the ordinary way.

Motion agreed to.

Question put, "That the House do agree with the Lords' Amendments."

Mr. WEIR challenged the Speaker's decision that the "Ayes have it."

*__Mr. SPEAKER__: I consider the conduct of the hon. Member to be frivolous, and therefore I shall not call for a Division.

Lords' Amendments agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Supply,—considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1894-5.

Class II.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall) said, he would ask the Financial or the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury if the Government would be so good as not to bring on the Vote for the Attorney General to-day?

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. T. E. Ellis, Merionethshire) said, he hardly thought that any agreement of the kind suggested could be made at this period of the Sitting. In the course of the afternoon, when they saw what progress was being made, some statement might be made as to the Votes to be taken.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that perhaps the hon. Member forgot that the Chancellor of the Exchequer promised that no important Vote would be taken. ["No, no!"] Yes; the right hon. Gentleman gave the House a pledge that no important Vote would be taken late at night or at an inconvenient time. After 6 o'clock would be "most inconvenient" on a Saturday Sitting.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not recede from any pledge he had given the House. No doubt an agreement would be arrived at in the course of the afternoon.

1. £22,460, to complete the sum for Colonial Office.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he rose for the purpose of obtaining from Her Majesty's Government some more satisfactory statement with regard to their policy in the Transvaal than they had hitherto succeeded in obtaining from Ministers. Since he had the opportunity of addressing the House on this subject a few weeks ago he had received a great deal of information from the Transvaal and from persons who were interested in the Transvaal, who had relatives there and large pecuniary interests in that country. He was assured by all his informants, most of whom were previously unknown to him, that the statements which he made in the House on the previous occasion were not at all exaggerated, but were rather below the mark, as to the dangerous and critical position of affairs in the Transvaal, and as to the oppression and injustice with which British subjects were being treated there. Of all the melancholy and humiliating events of recent years, that of the Transvaal was associated with the most sad and deplorable memories. He said that for the purpose of convincing the House that the Government and the English people owed especial reparation to British subjects who were resident in that country. Thirteen years ago their interests were betrayed, hundreds of them were ruined and driven from their homes, and their fortunes practically confiscated. Ever since that time British residents in the Transvaal had been subjected to much oppression and many humiliations. The words used to him by a prominent British resident was that he never would have imagined that British subjects could have been so bullied and cowed in a foreign country as they had been in the Transvaal during the last 13 years. [*A laugh.*] This was hardly a subject for laughter. Anyone acquainted with the Transvaal would be able to bear out this statement. Within the last few years a very considerable change had taken place in that country. The gold discoveries in the Raandt and other districts had given great impetus to British colonisation, and had led to the establishment in that country of thousands of British subjects, who now actually outnumbered the Boer residents. The result of that migration had been that the Transvaal, instead of being in a bankrupt condition, had become one of the most flourishing portions of South Africa. The Transvaal Treasury was full to overflowing of money paid by British residents, who were developing its great natural wealth. The surplus of the Transvaal Government for the last two or three years had been about £1,000,000 a year. The amount of British capital now invested in the Transvaal was at least £100,000,000, and British subjects paid 19-20ths of the whole taxation of the country. He would take the three principal points of oppression to which British residents were subjected. In the first place, they were denied the privilege of getting the franchise. They were perfectly willing to obtain their rights by constitutional means. Many of them were willing to become citizens of the Transvaal; they had committed no act of outrage or rebellion; our fellow-countrymen there had done nothing more than to hold peaceful meetings at which they protested against the injustice to which they had been subjected. Within the past 12 months the Boers had undertaken a course of special oppression and attack on the rights of our fellow-subjects. The Boers had passed a law which prevented a foreigner from becoming enfranchised unless his father had been naturalised. Numbers of British subjects had been commandeered, and when they had been released on the demand of Sir H. Loch, they were turned adrift 200 miles from their home without any means provided them for getting back. When he had put a question on the subject in that House the hon. Member the Parliamentary Secretary to the Colonial Office had replied that he would make no inquiry into the matter, as to do so would be to throw an imputation upon the Boer Government. Surely it was his duty to have inquired into a matter of that kind. The question he asked was put in perfectly proper terms to the hon. Gentleman. He asked him if certain statements were or were not accurate, and if, having made inquiry, he could state that they were untrue. If the hon. Gentleman had been able to do that he would not only have justified the Boers, against whom these charges were made, but he would have inflicted some confusion on him (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett). The statements he was referring to were made by a gentleman writing under his own name to *The Scotsman* on July 22, 1894, and were to the effect that not only were British subjects forcibly taken to the front to render personal service, but they had to provide horse, saddle, rifle, ammunition, and eight days' provisions at their own expense. That was the last straw; so the British residents formed themselves into a Defence Association and appealed to the British Authorities for protection. On Sir Henry Loch's remonstrance, President Krüger ordered the release of the men who had been commandeered. They were accordingly released on the open veldt, but they were not even supplied with food and other necessaries, and if it had not been for friends would have starved, for they were set at liberty 200 miles from home, without any means of getting back. Yet the Transvaal Treasury had a surplus this year of £900,000 paid out of British pockets. This was a deliberate statement made by a gentleman in his own name, and he had in support of it many other letters and extracts from Transvaal papers. Yet the hon. Gentleman would not even take the trouble to inquire whether the statement was true or not. He thought it most discreditable to the Government that they should allow such an attitude to be taken up by one of their number. This was not the only way in which British subjects were persecuted in the Transvaal. They were denied the franchise, and although personal commandeering had now been withdrawn, they were still subject to commandeering for food and supplies.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Read the evidence of that.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: If the hon. Member will be patient I will. I have a statement, dated July 22, that the whole of the British residents in the Lydenberg district have been subjected to a levy of £5 and £15, according to classes.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. S. Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): There are two descriptions of commandeering, and that for food and supplies applies equally to burghers and foreigners. British subjects are now exempt from personal commandeering, but they are subject in other respects to the same commandeering for food and supplies as burghers and foreigners.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that that was exactly the point in dispute. He thought the hon. Gentleman was mistaken, and that when he got fuller information he would find that British subjects were still liable to commandeering for food and supplies up to the amount of £15. Of course, if that form of commandeering was withdrawn, all the better. Then there was a special War Tax which, he believed, was imposed on all residents in the Transvaal. He now turned to the most oppressive action on the part of the Transvaal Government — namely, the prohibition of the right of public meeting in the open air.

Mr. S. BUXTON: That is prohibited to all foreign residents.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the Volksraad had passed a law which was unparalleled in history, except perhaps so far as Russia was concerned. The Committee would hardly believe that that law forbade all right of public meeting in the open air to British residents in the Transvaal. The hon. Gentleman said it also applied to all other foreign residents, but the number of them was comparatively small.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's County, Birr): About one-half.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg pardon. Do I understand the hon. Gentleman to say that of the foreign residents in the Transvaal one-half are not of British origin?

Mr. MOLLOY: Yes.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I differ from the hon. Gentleman entirely. I say that nearly four-fifths are British.

Mr. MOLLOY: Look at the Census Returns.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT suggested that the hon. Member should speak later, and produce his evidence. This law forbade all outdoor assemblies of foreign residents, and also all processions and demonstrations. It gave the Boer Police power to break up such assemblies by force. Even indoor assemblies of more than five persons were prohibited. Some 13,000 British residents signed a Petition to the President of the Volksraad asking for the franchise, but it was ignored. This gagging law was passed in the Volksraad by 17 votes to six. So that a majority of 11 Boer burghers had absolutely silenced thousands of British residents, who were building up the wealth and prosperity of the Transvaal. When the British residents held a meeting to draw up their remonstrance, he was informed that 500 armed Boers rode amongst them and threatened to shoot them unless they immediately dispersed. That was the sort of treatment to which British residents were subjected. Surely it was such as no civilised country in the world would submit to. They were being deprived of the most elementary privileges of free men. Had the Government told the House they would do their best to relieve their fellow-subjects in the Transvaal from these disabilities, this question would not have had to be pressed. But what was the line taken up by the Under Secretary for the Colonies? He had gone out of his way to justify the Boers.

MR. S. BUXTON: No.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT repeated that the Under Secretary so acted, and that he had done so over and over again. He had encouraged them in their present acts of injustice towards British subjects. In reply to a question the other day as to whether the franchise had been denied to all British residents, the Under Secretary first stated that "the Government had no official information on the subject." Such an answer evaded the question.

MR. PAUL (Edinburgh, S.): My hon. Friend did not evade the question.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I will prove that the hon. Member knows nothing about it. He did evade it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That is not the Question before the Committee.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, continuing, said, that the hon. Gentleman was asked whether we had any Representative in the Transvaal through whom information could be obtained, and he replied—

"We have all the information we require, though we have no special official information."

Surely that was evading the question. He now slipped the extra adjective "special" in in addition to "official." Then the hon. Gentleman was asked a third time—

"Is it or is it not the fact that such a law has been passed."

And so at last he was forced to answer—

"I believe such a law was passed."

Why could he not at first have said straightforwardly that such a law had been passed? He knew perfectly well that it was so, and he therefore did try to evade the question. There was, however, one answer the hon. Gentleman gave calculated to do still more serious injury to our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal. The Under Secretary for the Colonies had admitted that the right of open-air public meeting had been denied to British subjects in the Transvaal, and that the right of indoor meeting had been restricted. The right of meeting was, in fact, refused to more than five persons.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir W. HARCOURT, Derby): Coercion.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Yes, coercion of the worst kind, because it was without any provocation, for our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal had been guilty of no crimes; they had not committed murders; they had not mutilated cattle; they had not boycotted their neighbours. They had been perfectly peaceful, and yet they were subjected to a gross and unparalleled Coercion Act. The Under Secretary had said that

"whatever might be the merits or demerits of these restrictive enactments, the South African Republic appeared to be acting within their rights in passing such laws."

Why did the hon. Gentleman encourage the Boers in that way? Why did he thus stimulate them to disregard in this outrageous manner the elementary rights of man and the liberties of British subjects? The policy of the hon. Member was totally wrong. By his statements the Boers had been led to believe that Great Britain was actually afraid of them, and were therefore encouraged to continue in their oppressive conduct. He was not saying that on his own authority; he was saying that on the authority of dozens of persons who were well acquainted with the Transvaal. The Government should bear in mind that they were not dealing with a highly civilised people. He wished to say nothing unnecessarily harsh against the Boers of the Transvaal. They were, no doubt, valiant; but as a people they were singularly ignorant. They had held supreme power over the native tribes surrounding them, and often had used that power in a most tyrannical and cruel way. Now the Boers were trying to deal with British subjects in the same way. Statements such as had been made by the Under Secretary strengthened the Boers' belief that they were invincible, and the result was that the position of our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal grew more and more unbearable. The Government, no doubt, wished to maintain peace, but the course which they took was not really calculated to accomplish that purpose. It was likely to encourage the Boers in their aggression and in their oppression of British subjects, until the position became intolerable. Then the British Government would be confronted with the necessity of interference. The right way to ensure peace and to protect our fellow-subjects was clearly and firmly, but courteously, to point out to the Boers that encroachments upon the rights of British subjects would not be tolerated. The danger Ministers were incurring by their weakness was very great indeed, for they were creating a terrible feeling of bitterness and exasperation among our fellow-subjects. The time must come when all the mischief and wrong done in 1881 by the capitulation after Majuba would be undone, when the old state of affairs would return, and when the whole of South Africa would be under the British flag. How this was to come about he would not presume to say, but such a time was approaching beyond a doubt. The irresistible enterprise, industry, and governing genius of the English were asserting themselves in spite of the failures, errors, and betrayals of British Governments. What the Government had to do was to see that British rights in these regions were firmly and effectively upheld. If British subjects were informed that the Government would not allow the Boers to take from them their just privileges there would be no necessity for a revolt. The danger was that our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal, who were brave men, with English blood and English hatred of oppression, and far more civilised than the Boer burghers, might be driven by intolerable oppression into taking precipitate action. The best way to prevent that was for the Government to give both the Boers and our British fellow-subjects in the Transvaal to understand that they would support the rights of British subjects. Only by that means, in his opinion, could a sanguinary collision be prevented in the Transvaal. He deprecated the language used by Ministers in that House, which amounted to a practical encouragement to the Boers to proceed with unjust legislation, as causing infinite harm to British interests. By their weakness and vacillation the Government were prejudicing the interests of peace. He appealed to Ministers to try to promptly realise the gravity of the situation, and the fierce exasperation now felt by our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal. These were law-abiding men, to whose industry the Transvaal owed its prosperity. They were men who were maintaining the credit and honour of this country under the most trying circumstances, which men were entitled to the practical and effective support and protection—support which it was the duty of the British Government to give all British subjects abroad.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) said, he did not feel to the same extent as the hon. Member who had just sat down the fears and apprehensions which he had expressed. Nevertheless, it was true that some of the recent acts of the Government of the South African Republic had been very inimical to British and foreign interests in that territory, and he thought the Government of the Republic ought to be made to understand that acts of the kind could not be tolerated for long by the foreign population to whom the prosperity of the Transvaal was entirely due. The protests of the foreign population were quite intelligible, but it would be an error to suppose that that population had the slightest intention of submitting once more to the rule of Downing Street. That was about the last thing they would think of doing. He did not think that a revolution in South African affairs would be at all a desirable event. In his opinion it would be a most satisfactory evolution of affairs in that part of the world if the different countries south of the Zambesi were to confederate, so that in future they should form one country. He thought it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to warn the Government of the South African Republic that the steps they had taken could not be allowed under the peculiar circumstances existing in the country, seeing that they were directed against the very men to whom the Transvaal owed its prosperity, and who were free men accustomed to certain laws and privileges.

MR. TOMLINSON said, the position was one of deep interest to the country at large and to that House. It was a remarkable thing that there should be so much apathy in the country as to what became of British subjects and British interests abroad. There was a time when a matter of this kind would have been regarded with a keen feeling in the country, and when the Government would have been impelled to take strong steps to protect British subjects. What they complained of in the present case was that the Government did not seem to consider it to be their first duty to find out, or to take proper means to find out, what sort of treatment British subjects were receiving in various parts of the world; nor did they take notice of information that they received from outside sources, but disregarded all unofficial statements, and permitted all sorts of excuses being made by Foreign Governments for placing British subjects in an inferior position. We were now suffering from the Nemesis of our policy of some years ago when we allowed the Boers to think that a Boer was better than an Englishman, and to trample upon the British flag, and neglected to use the might of Great Britain to maintain our right position in the Transvaal. The time had long gone by when an Englishman, in any part of the world, could say *Civis Romanus Sum.* Foreigners had been allowed to trample on the rights of the British subjects without any reparation being obtained. Take the case of a German in any part of the world. He knew well enough that if he was the recipient of treatment to which his Government took exception he would receive the authoritative support of his Government. The same thing was equally true in the case of Frenchmen. If the Government would not stand by British subjects abroad and support their protests against unjust treatment it was obvious that they were preparing the way for the downfall of the British Empire.

Dr. CLARK said, that the alleged facts of the hon. Member for Sheffield were the merest fictions, and he would rather take the opinion of his hon. Friend the Member for King's County, because he was a British subject with great experience in the Transvaal; he had mingled among these people, and he spoke from personal experience. The hon. Gentleman who denied the facts set out obviously knew nothing about the matter, and his complaints were not worthy of consideration. He asserted that British subjects were terribly misgoverned in the Transvaal and could not get the franchise. But if the laws of the land were referred to it would be found that there was no country in the world where foreigners got privileges and rights of that character quicker than the Transvaal. Any foreigner after two years' residence could vote in elections to the Second Chamber of the Legislature, and after five years he could vote in elections to the First Chamber.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that was not so.

Dr. CLARK said, he knew what the laws were, because they were submitted to him before they were passed. With regard to commandeering, unless a man was willing to be commandeered his farm might be burned and he would probably be murdered. So that it was necessary he should join in mutual self-defence. As to education in the Transvaal, no States in the world spent so much on education as the Boer States in the Transvaal. He hoped the questions at issue between the Transvaal and ourselves would be settled by the Colonial Office in an amicable spirit, and that the change which must take place in the Transvaal, by which persons now regarded as foreigners would become citizens, would be accomplished without much friction.

*Mr. S. BUXTON said, he quite agreed that it was unquestionably the duty of any Government, whether Liberal or Conservative, to defend British interests wherever they might exist, and that where the rights of British subjects were unjustly infringed to see that they had justice. He also agreed that it was largely due to the enterprise and energy of the British inhabitants of the Transvaal that the country was in its present prosperous position. He, however, felt bound to say that such a speech as that of the hon. Member for Sheffield, whatever his intentions might be, could only tend to create difficulties which otherwise would not be encountered in seeking to obtain a satisfactory solution of questions arising between this country and the Transvaal Republic. As everybody was not a Member of that House, and perhaps there were a certain number of persons outside who might attach weight and importance to the statements of the hon. Member — although, of course, Members of the House knew what amount of weight and importance to attach to them—he felt it necessary to say that he was confident the hon. Member in no sense expressed the opinions or feelings of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who usually sat on the Front Opposition Bench. He had only that day received a letter from a correspondent of the hon. Member in Edinburgh—a letter the style, stamp, and temper of which were faithfully reflected in the speech of the hon. Member. The writer was a specimen of the correspondents of whom the hon. Member had spoken. He abused the "villanies" Liberal Government and those whom he called "the bloody Boers," and accused the foreign residents in the Transvaal of cowardice for not having taken up arms before.

Sir E. ASHMEAD BARTLETT: I have not read that letter.

*Mr. S. BUXTON said, it was at all events a curious coincidence that the style and stamp and temper of the letter were reflected so faithfully in the speech of the hon. Member that he (Mr. Buxton) took it for granted that not only had the hon. Gentleman read it, but digested it. Perhaps some of the expressions contained in the letter could hardly be used in a Parliamentary sense, but he knew that the extra-Parliamentary utterances of the hon. Gentleman accorded very well with those that appeared in the letter. He took this to be a sample of the kind of correspondence which had come into the hands of the hon. Gentleman, and of which he had spoken. But he would not go further into this matter, except to say that the hon. Member had to-day made almost identically the same speech that he made the other day. Therefore, he did not wish to detain the Committee by going at any length into the questions which were then raised and the statements made thereupon. It was no part of his duty, nor was it his intention, to defend the South African Republic against the attacks of the hon. Gentleman. Still, after all, it was the duty of some responsible person to say something in explanation of the action of Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Gentleman had touched upon the treatment of the prisoners who had been commandeered by the South African Republic. He had seen and read what had appeared in the papers upon the subject, and he thought it was perfectly clear that the whole expedition was conducted in a way that would shock our War Office, both as regards commissariat and transport. The Government of South Africa commandeered under exceptional circumstances—that was to say, that everybody had to provide their own arms and other necessaries—but the prisoners who refused to serve were not treated with anything like barbarity or inhumanity. What happened to them was that they were placed in the same position as other burghers who had been commandeered. He was aware that it was said that the prisoners were turned adrift 200 miles from their homes, but the fact was that they were offered the use of wagons, which they declined to accept. There was nothing whatever to show that the prisoners were treated with inhumanity.

Sir E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT reminded the hon. Gentleman that the only complaint that he made was that these prisoners were turned adrift 200 miles from home.

Mr. S. BUXTON, continuing, said, that while it was true that British subjects, like the burghers, were still liable to the War Tax, the special military contribution levied on British subjects alone had been withdrawn.

Mr. BARTLEY inquired whether any British subjects were now being specially commandeered?

*Mr. S. BUXTON said, that the particular commandeering consisted of nothing more nor less than the contribution of the War Tax, which was levied on all the inhabitants alike. What the British subjects had contended for was exemption from special military contributions, and he was glad to say that Her Majesty's Government were dealing with the Boer Government in a friendly way in regard to this matter, with the result that they had been able to secure the two points that they desired—namely, the personal exemption of British subjects from commandeering, and also from special contributions of goods and money. With regard to the law directed against meetings, while no Government of this country would ever think of introducing a law exactly on all-fours with that which obtained in the Transvaal—except, of course, as regards Ireland!—he should like to point out to the Committee that the same law was practically in force in England with regard to the holding of meetings. The fact was, that that law was in some respects even less stringent than the law which prevailed in England at the present time, for, whilst it required six persons to constitute a meeting in the Transvaal, only three persons were necessary to constitute a meeting in England. It differed in prohibiting all outdoor meetings. In regard to the question of the franchise, he regretted — as he had previously stated — the stringency of the system in the Transvaal, and thought the restrictions upon foreign residents were unfair. The hon. Member for Caithness was wrong on the point. Two years only, it was true, were required to vote for the Second Volksraad—which had, however, no power—but no less than 12 years to obtain a vote for, or to be elected to, the First Volksraad. But, as to active interference in the internal affairs of an independent State in reference to these and other matters, he thought hon. Members ought to be very careful how far they recommended such an extreme course. Apart from the question of commandeering, the Government had received no representations from British residents in the Transvaal that they desired the Government in any way to interfere in the internal affairs of the Republic. It was the desire of the Government to deal with the Republic in a frank and friendly spirit. As Englishmen, they could express a hope that their British fellow-subjects in the Transvaal might be treated with fairness and consideration; and the Government would always be ready to do all in their power to ensure that result. But he could only repeat that nothing made these friendly arrangements more difficult than the sort of speech—the sort of abusive speech—that had been uttered by the hon. Gentleman opposite. [*A cry of* "Oh!"] Yes, the hon. Gentleman's speech was abusive of a friendly country with which Her Majesty's Government were in constant negotiation, and he believed that those who were customarily responsible for voicing the opposition to the Government policy would have dealt with this matter in an entirely different way to that which had been adopted by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) said, he could not agree with the statement made that the position of affairs in the Transvaal two months ago was of no importance. He certainly thought that at one period of the crisis the situation was a very serious one, and as far as British interests were concerned, likely to cause the gravest anxiety. President Krüger had been unsuccessful in obtaining certain rates he had levied on the chiefs resident some distance from Pretoria. He (Mr. Dalziel) had some friends in a bank in Pretoria, and he believed that a very large number of gentlemen hailing from his constituency were engaged in business there. One night these British subjects had a summons issued on behalf of President Krüger, demanding that within 24 hours they should appear at a certain place with horse, ammunition, and rifle, and sufficient provisions to last for a certain period. These men were resident in the Transvaal, but were denied all voice in the administration of the country, and the result was that they objected to this action on the part of the President of the Republic. He must say that when British subjects were ordered within 24 hours to go out and fight for President Krüger when German, Italian, and Belgian residents were exempted from the operations of this commandeering it could not be regarded as satisfactory by any man who was a Britisher. The whole pivot of the question seemed to be that all other foreign residents were exempted from the commandeering, whilst the British residents were subject to it. He must admit that on the facts being laid before the Secretary for the Colonies he did everything that could be done to induce President Krüger to recede from his original position, and he thought the result had justified the line of policy adopted. The result of the negotiations was that in future this commandeering had been rendered impossible as far as British residents were concerned, and he heartily congratulated the Under Secretary for the Colonies upon the present position of the question.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that two statements made by gentlemen opposite were personal to himself and required an answer. The Under Secretary for the Colonies had adopted a course which was rather popular with him and some other Members of the Government, and had made a personal attack upon him. He could easily retaliate upon the hon. Gentleman in the same way and perhaps with a little more effect; but he thought that such methods of warfare were unworthy of the House. He had never made a personal attack upon any Member in the House or out of it. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He had vigorously attacked the policy of the Government and their acts, but had never made a personal attack upon a political opponent. The remark of the hon. Gentleman that his (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett's) statements had little weight in the House was quite unworthy of him, and he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) only mentioned it to express his contempt for such methods of political warfare. The hon. Gentleman, however, got a few cheap cheers by making these personal remarks, and he supposed, therefore, he would continue to make them. The hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) had accused him of uttering fictions. The hon. Gentleman's statements with regard to the franchise had just been shown by the Under Secretary himself to be absolutely incorrect, and the hon. Gentleman had not attempted to prove that he (Sir Ashmead-Bartlett) was wrong except only as to his statement with regard to the proportion of British people in the Transvaal. It might be that the hon. Gentleman's estimate was right, but he (Sir E. Ashmead-Bartlett) adhered to his own estimate; and certainly, even if his estimate was wrong, that was no ground for bringing a charge of uttering fiction against him. The hon. Gentleman (Dr. Clark) was himself utterly wrong in regard to the franchise, and in his speech he had entirely ignored the question of the right of public meeting as well as the recent law which so restricted the franchise that for the future no foreign resident could obtain it unless his parents were naturalised before him. The Committee must have listened with some surprise to the Under Secretary's statement that the law of England resembled the law of the Transvaal with regard to public meetings. In the Transvaal all right of procession or public meeting out-of-doors was denied. Was there anything like that in this country?

MR. S. BUXTON: I said with a difference.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, there was no analogy. In this country there was a free right of public meeting out-of-doors unless it happened to obstruct the traffic in a thoroughfare. There was no right of outdoor meeting in the Transvaal, and indoor meetings had been restricted to five persons. [An hon. MEMBER: What about Ireland?] As to Ireland, such laws as had been passed restricting to a limited extent public meeting had been passed on account of the grave state of crime and outrage in Ireland. Our fellow-subjects in the Transvaal had been guilty of no outrages. They had not boycotted or shot landlords or tenants or mutilated cattle. Yet, because they had dared to assemble to pass a peaceable remonstrance against the privilege of the franchise being withheld from them, this stringent and oppressive law denying them all right of public meeting had been promptly passed by the Boer Volksraad. He repudiated all desire of causing disturbance in the Transvaal, and he denied that the speech he had made earlier, or the policy he had recommended to Her Majesty's Government, would cause disturbance or war. The course which the Government had pursued in this House, the policy defended by the Under Secretary just now, the policy greeted with cheers by gentlemen below the Gangway, was the policy which was certain to cause disturbance and war in the Transvaal and elsewhere. The Members of the Government were untaught by all previous experience They had tried the same policy a dozen times within the last 20 years, and each time it had landed this country always in great difficulties, and often in war. The policy of timely firmness, combined with courtesy, was the true policy of peace, and it had been proved to be so over and over again. Until the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Buxton) and his colleagues recognised that these constant surrenders, these weak answers, these half-hearted remonstrances, these timid justifications of the encroachments of Foreign Powers, were not either the honourable or the peaceful policy, there would never be any protection for our fellow-subjects abroad, and there would be the greatest risk of involving this country in disturbance and ultimately in war.

SIR R. TEMPLE (Surrey, Kingston) wished to obtain some information respecting a deputation which he believed was sent by the Queen of Swaziland to Her Majesty's Government. He desired to know whether the deputation had ever reached this country, and, if so, what had been the outcome of its mission? He asked the question, because certain Papers had been placed in his hands which indicated that the deputation before it left Swaziland entertained some very strong opinions regarding allegiance to the British Crown, the sanctity of the promises alleged to have been made to the British Crown, and their unwillingness to come under the sovereignty of the Boers. This information had been placed in his hands confidentially, and he could not vouch for its accuracy, but he should like the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Buxton) to give some information on the subject. The hon. Gentleman had previously stated that the Swazis would not be compelled to come under the Boer sovereignty unless they were really willing, and he wished to know whether the Government would take steps to assure themselves as to the reality of the sentiments entertained by the Swazis in reference to a possible transfer of their allegiance from the British Crown to the Boers?

*Mr. S. BUXTON: There was a deputation—not a very representative one—which came down as far as Natal and saw Mr. Shepstone, the eldest son of the late Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and then returned to Swaziland. Sir Henry Loch recently instructed Colonel Martin, our Representative in Swaziland, to get the Queen-Mother to send down a representative deputation to the Cape. This she gladly did. The deputation—a very representative one—saw Sir Henry Loch and went back. It is now probably in communication with the Queen-Mother. As regards the question of Swaziland, I have more than once gone into it in some detail in this House, and I do not think my hon. Friend would wish me to do so again; but as regards the rights of the natives, I may say that we shall do our best, as we have done in the past, to protect such rights as they have. It must be recollected that, as a matter of fact, very unwisely probably, but, rightly or wrongly, the Swazis themselves have practically given up nearly the whole of their rights in the country and their independence. That was the position we found when we came to deal with the question, and, without going into particulars, I can only say that, as regards the remaining rights of the natives, we shall do our best to protect them.

Commander BETHELL pointed out that although Swaziland was not part of our territory we were bound by the strictest engagement under the Convention of 1884 not to allow the country to pass into the hands of the South African Republic.

*Mr. S. BUXTON: I understood the hon. Baronet the Member for Kingston (Sir R. Temple) to speak about the handing over of the property of the British Crown to the Transvaal, and what I denied was that in any sense of the term Swaziland had been British territory. I quite admit our engagements, and it is because of our engagements that we shall do our best to protect the remaining rights of the natives.

Dr. CLARK said that, as a matter of fact, Swaziland used to be part of the British Empire; but by the Treaty of 1881 it was separated from it, and by the Treaty of 1884 the Transvaal agreed to recognise its independence. He trusted that in any final settlement the rights of the Swazis to the land, and especially to the waterland, would be looked into. He was not prepared to admit that a native King could give concessions affecting the well-being of his people for a bottle of rum or for nothing. The only thing he was interested in, so far as Swaziland was concerned, was that when bringing about a settlement the rights of the natives should not be overlooked.

Mr. MACDONA (Southwark, Rotherhithe) said, he rose to congratulate hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House upon having amongst them a Member like the Member for Kirkcaldy, who advocated a spirited policy as regarded our foreign relations. He (Mr. Macdona) had had similar letters to those the hon. Member had received from his constituents, complaining of the intolerable state of tyranny under which British residents lived in the Transvaal. He hoped that the evidence they had had today of the existence of some backbone amongst the supporters of the Government would not wear away too soon.

SIR R. TEMPLE said, that what he had meant was that he had evidence to show that the Swazis entertained a sentiment of allegiance to the British Sovereign, and he hoped Her Majesty's Government would be quite sure as to the existence or non-existence of that sentiment in the hearts of these people before they consented to the transfer of their allegiance to the Boers.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the final settlement of the Swaziland question had been postponed for six months. When did that period expire?

MR. S. BUXTON: On the 31st of December.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked if the hon. Member was in a position to give an assurance that the Swaziland question would not be settled before the next meeting of Parliament? It was important that the House should have an opportunity of discussing the matter before a final settlement was effected.

*MR. S. BUXTON said, he was not in a position to give such an assurance. A certain Treaty had been made with the South African Republic, and had been before the House many months. Every opportunity had been given to the hon. Gentleman and to others to discuss, but no objection had been raised to, its terms. If within the next six months the Swazis were prepared to accept it the Treaty would become valid.

MR. WEIR wanted to know what right British subjects had in the Transvaal? The subjects of one country going into another country and residing there must be prepared to obey its laws. If those laws were not in accordance with his views it was not for him to object. The Transvaal must be permitted to settle its own internal affairs. Fortunately, the present Government did not favour the old Tory policy of big countries endeavouring to slaughter little ones—a policy which sometimes led to such mishaps as that of Majuba Hill.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is wandering from the question before the Committee.

*MR. WEIR said, he had made all the observations he desired to make on that point. He would now merely ask for information with regard to the prospects of the gold standard of British Honduras.

*MR. S. BUXTON said, that with regard to the gold standard of British Honduras, he dared say the hon. Member was aware that they were agreed that there should be a gold standard there, and the matter was still under consideration. They would hurry it on as fast as they could, and he hoped that such a standard would be in operation within the next six weeks or two months.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he thought everybody who desired to see the British Empire maintained must have looked with great hope and satisfaction upon the recent Conference at Ottawa. He would be glad to know whether the Government could make any statement as to whether they intended to take steps to carry out the ideas there expressed for knitting together the different parts of the British Empire, particularly the essential one as to the promotion of telegraphs and lines of steamers.

*MR. S. BUXTON said, that was a very important matter, and one which was of very great interest to the Mother Country as well as to the colonies. He agreed with the hon. Member in the hope that the Conference was a step in the direction of closer connection between the Mother Country and the colonies. Her Majesty's Government followed the proceedings with great interest, but the hon. Member would understand that, as they had not yet received Lord Jersey's Report, they had not come to any conclusion. He hoped to be able to lay that Report before the House at the earliest moment, in order to give Members an opportunity of making themselves acquainted with it before next Session.

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £100,757, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Subordinate Departments."

*MR. DODD (Essex, Maldon) desired to call attention to a matter relating to the Railway Companies and the conduct of the Board of Trade with regard to the powers they possessed. The Board of

Trade had, in relation to railways, very large and extensive powers, and as a rule these powers had been used by the Board of Trade wisely, with considerable firmness, and, at the same time, with moderation. But in the case to which he was going to call attention there had been an exception to the rule. The Board of Trade by the Act of 1873 had certain powers of dealing with cases of undue preference in the carriage of goods on railways. The Acts forbade unfairness on the part of Railway Companies against any particular individual or any particular class of goods. It was common knowledge that at the present time there were, as there had been for many years past, considerable complaints made with regard to preference. Some of the complaints were unfounded; but there were, undoubtedly, instances where the complaints were well founded, and where undue preference was shown to foreign as against home produce. There was a section of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1873, which said that the Board of Trade might appoint a person to take up the case of the traders and bring the matter before the Railway Commissioners where the complaint was one of unjust and undue preference. That Act had been in force for more than 20 years, and he did not think the Board of Trade during the whole of the 20 years had ever put in force that section or appointed any person to represent the traders. It was not because the traders had made no complaints or that there had not been serious ground for complaint, but because the Board of Trade had a system of declining to act on the power given them by that section. That legislation remained untouched, but there had been fresh legislation which, to some extent, altered the position of the Board of Trade. By the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888, a clause was introduced stating that if a person sending goods by railway was of opinion that the charges were unreasonable he could make complaint to the Board of Trade. Under Section 31 of the Act of 1888 it became the duty of the Board of Trade, upon receiving such a complaint, to call the parties together and endeavour to arrange matters and assist them to come to terms. That was generally called the Conciliation Section. Since these two Acts were passed a third had been added to the Statute Book which would shortly come into operation, and which provided that in future in regard to litigation before the Railway Commissioners no costs would be awarded to either side. In other words, if the Railway Company succeeded they did not get costs; if, on the other hand, the trader succeeded he would not get costs. The effect of that would be that traders in the future, going before the Commissioners whether right or wrong, would have to bear their own costs. That being so, it became very important that in future the Board of Trade should put in force the power of taking up the trader's case, which, as he had shown, they possessed. His present complaint was that they had failed for 23 years to put that power in force, and he was of opinion the failure to act would continue unless pressure was put upon the Department. The section of the Act of 1873 would clearly, if acted on, give the traders very important relief. The position of affairs would be that the trader would first try the conciliation to be exercised by the Board of Trade, and if it failed he would be able to get the Board of Trade to back him up and take the case before the Commissioners. The fourth Annual Report of the Board of Trade contained an account of the complaints made under Section 31 of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888, and gave the results achieved by conciliation. The figures showed that the number of complaints dealt with in the year was 75, of which 21 were still under consideration. The Report went on to state—

> "In 24 instances the intervention of the Board of Trade led to no result. In 12 instances out of the 24 the Board of Trade decided that they could not take any further action after receiving the explanations of the Company. In five instances the issues involved were of too great importance to be dealt with under Section 31. In two instances in which complaint was made of the allowance made by the Railway Company for the provision of private owners' waggons, the Board of Trade, at the request of the complainants, exercised the powers conferred upon them under the Railway Rates and Charges Order Confirmation Acts, 1881 and 1892, of referring the disputes to arbitration, and appointed the Railway and Canal Commission in each case to act as arbitrator. Up to the present these are the only disputes which the Board of Trade have been called upon to refer to arbitration under the Acts in question. In three instances the Board of Trade could not take any further action owing to the decision of the Companies; in one of these the Company

stated that they were prepared to defend their action if necessary before the Railway Commissioners, and in the others the disputes related to the charges on traffic from private sidings, a subject to which I refer later on in this Report. In one instance the question involved was a legal one, which has since been decided in the Law Courts in the complainants' favour. The remaining instance is one to which I must specially call attention on account of the attitude adoped by the Railway Company. Particulars of this case are set out in the Appendix, from which it will be seen that the Great Northern (Ireland) Railway Company refused to attend a conference suggested by the Board of Trade, contending that the question involved a legal issue which could not be disposed of under the Conciliation Clause. The Company persisted in their refusal, in spite of the pressure exercised by the Board of Trade to induce them to attend, and I regret, therefore, to have to report that the Board of Trade were thus denied the opportunity they thought reasonable of making an endeavour to bring about an amicable settlement of the dispute. This is the first occasion on which I have had to report the unwillingness of a Railway Company to discuss a complaint before the Board of Trade."

He thought he had said enough to show that conciliation was apt to fail, and might fail, because the Board of Trade had not used the rod which they had in their cupboard, and which they had kept in their cupboard for 20 years—namely, their power of going before the Railway Commissioners, and taking up the traders' case, and, notwithstanding their general character, the Board of Trade deserved a certain amount of censure for not having taken up the cases of the traders in these and many instances which must have come under their notice. He should like to have some explanation of why they had not adopted this course in the past, and some assurance that they intended to do so in the future. It became even more important for the future than it had been in the past, now that the expenses incurred by the trader who went before the Railway Commissioners must be defrayed by himself whether he won or lost. His other complaint with regard to the use by the Board of their powers was in respect of the hours of labour of railway servants. With regard to the hours of railway servants, the Act of 1893, regulating their hours, allowed servants of Railway Companies to send in to the Board of Trade any complaint as to excessive hours to which they were subjected. There had been complaints from the public, and some complaints, in certain specific instances, from the servants on certain lines. There was a provision in the Act requiring that the Railway Company, where there was a complaint which at first sight appeared to be well-founded, should be called upon to submit to the Board of Trade a schedule showing the hours their servants were employed, and upon that the Board of Trade had power to deal with them somewhat as in the earlier Act by what was in substance conciliation, and thus endeavour to bring about a better state of affairs. If this effort at conciliation failed there was a provision which enabled the Board of Trade to take up the case of the servants before the Railway Commissioners. His complaint with regard to the conduct of the Board of Trade in relation to this Statute was one which he made with more hesitation than the complaint he made with regard to the earlier Statute, because the Act had only been in operation a short time, and the date had not yet come when it was the duty of the Board of Trade to submit a Report of their proceedings to Parliament, and, therefore, he was speaking only from the best evidence of what could be gathered from various isolated instances. He thought that complaints were received as early as January or February of this year, and with regard to some of them, he believed in regard to all, where the Railway Companies declined to accede to the views of the Board of Trade, no steps had been taken to bring the matter before the Railway Commissioners. He spoke with hesitation, because he had no information at first hand, but they had seen or heard nothing of these cases in the Courts; and his belief was that the power of bringing the long hours before the Railway Commissioners and getting them put a stop to by their decision had never yet been made use of by the Board of Trade. It seemed rather a long time to play with a complaint from January down to the present time. A little more energy on the part of the Board of Trade with regard to the hours of railway servants would do no harm. He trusted that in this matter, and also in the other matter to which he had referred, and which was of great importance to the traders of this country, the Board of Trade would act with a somewhat more vigorous hand in putting in force the powers with which they had been entrusted by Parliament.

*SIR A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.), though heartily concurring with the general attitude of the President of the Board of Trade in reference to railway questions, had noticed both under the administration of the late President and—though to a less extent—that of the right hon. Gentleman who was at present at the Board of Trade, a too strongly-expressed determination not to exercise even those powers which they possessed for the protection of the rights of the community. He was not prepared to impeach the principle of that inaction, which was expressed as a desire to maintain an impartial attitude in dealing with railway matters, and to recognise that all Railway Companies were great traders carrying on an industry which was very essential and important to the commerce of this country; but its application had been too indiscriminate. And not only had there been an indisposition to undertake new duties in that direction, but he agreed in the criticism of his hon. Friend as to the inaction of the Department in exercising powers which they undoubtedly possessed under the Railway Regulation Act of 1873. When this indisposition of the Department to assume the responsibility of taking care of the interests of the traders was expressed, he thought the Department forgot that the opposite principle had been conceded in two recent Acts, and the obligation placed upon the Board of Trade to defend the interests of the community. In the Railway Rates Act and the Merchandise Marks Act the Board of Trade was invested with the responsibility of protecting the rights of the community as against certain classes. It was not to be forgotten that Railway Companies in dealing with traders possessed enormous advantages. They had a thorough organisation, permanent legal and other officials, and when as by the present Bill it was proposed to exempt them from the payment of costs it should be remembered that Railway Companies practically incurred little or no costs, because their permanent staff conducted their legal operations for them. On the other hand, traders were under compulsion to take legal advice and have legal representation, and that might become, under the section, a very great burden. It might be said that the Conciliation Clause seldom failed, and that, therefore, there was no reason for the Department taking further action. He thought the Department should be reminded that the principle of their own Bill at present passing through the House was that resort to a tribunal was not to take place unless conciliation had been previously appealed to to effect the purpose. That assumed that conciliation must fail in some cases. He acknowledged the great benefit of the Conciliation Clause, which had done much good, but it wanted a sanction, and there was no power to carry out any determination which might be arrived at by the Department as conciliators unless accepted by both parties to the dispute. They had now for the first time, by the Bill before the House, a right to resort to a tribunal on the part of the trader. Railway Companies had ceased to be judges in their own cause and in matters affecting their own interests, and that principle which was the great gain to the traders in this Bill was not only conceded, but would assuredly be extended in the future. There was a vast responsibility committed to the Board of Trade in taking care that the interests of the traders were adequately represented and vindicated, and he hoped that under the administration of the right hon. Gentleman this responsibility would be recognised, for whereever powers were already conferred, as they were by the Act of 1873, it would be an abdication of a plain duty if the Board of Trade failed to protect the interests of the public. He hoped those powers would be exercised by the Board of Trade, for it was only such a Board that could fully and adequately place the facts before the tribunal.

MAJOR DARWIN (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said, he desired to bring under the notice of the President of the Board of Trade a case of illegal railway fares. In March, 1893, he asked a question with regard to the railway fares of the Metropolitan District Railway, which appeared to him to be illegal. The President of the Board of Trade promised to move in the matter, but no action was taken until August. Shortly before August he wrote to the Board pointing out the facts; asking whether the fares were or were not illegal; and whether, if the fares were illegal, the Board could take action n the matter. He got a letter dated 10th August, 1893, in reply which said—

> "The Board of Trade have no power and no means to undertake to bring such a matter before a Court of Law at the instance of a party aggrieved."

That was a distinct statement from the Board that they had no power to interfere in the matter. When the Estimates came up in September, 1893, he drew the attention of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor in the Presidency of the Board of Trade to this statement in the letter of the Board; the right hon. Gentleman made no attempt to uphold that statement; on the contrary, he said he would look into the case, and if he found the charge well-founded he would direct a prosecution against the Railway Company, thus distinctly showing that the Board of Trade had the power which the Board stated it had not in its letter of the 10th of August, 1893. He allowed the question to sleep a little while; and in September last asked another question, when he got the answer that the matter was under consideration. He allowed another interval to elapse; and now, having first drawn attention to the matter 17 months ago, he thought he was entitled to receive some information on the point. He thought it a most serious matter that the Board of Trade should have absolutely forgotten the Act of 1844—which was called the Cheap Trains Act—which gave them the power, in a case where a Railway Company was acting in excess of its powers, to notify the Attorney General to proceed to get an injunction to restrain the Railway Company in their illegal action. The Committee would understand that in the case of a Railway Company like the Metropolitan District Company, where the fares amounted only to a few pence, an aggrieved party would hesitate before he himself took legal proceedings, which might cost thousands of pounds; and, therefore, unless the Board of Trade interfered, the Railway Company would continue to act illegally with impunity. It might be that the Metropolitan District Railway Company were charging legal fares; but he did not believe they were. He believed their first-class fares were illegal; and as to the third-class fares, with which he was more concerned, he believed they were also illegal, but he was not certain. But if his contention was right this Railway Company had, since he had taken up the matter, got £10,000 out of the public illegally; and if that was correct it was really time that the Board should act. If, on the other hand, he was wrong, he thought that, having raised the question three times in the House, he should be distinctly told that he was wrong. Though he had spoken strongly, perhaps, on the question, he should say that he had never anything but courtesy to acknowledge from the Board of Trade whenever he had occasion to approach it.

*MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, he did not intend to continue the discussion on the railway rates. He would only say on that subject that they were all indebted to his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade for the ability and the conciliatory temper with which he had facilitated the negotiations between the traders and the Railway Companies in the matter of the Railway Traffic Bill. But he rose principally to put a few specific questions to his right hon. Friend on other matters. He wished to know when they might expect the Report of the proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Railway Hours Act? With regard to the long hours of railway servants in signal-boxes, it was notorious that the Railway Companies were adopting most improper, most unfair, and most objectionable tactics in evading the spirit and the intentions of the House of Commons in that great declaration. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman when dealing with this question would bear in mind the strong words of one of his predecessors at the Board of Trade—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bristol—in his Draft Report for the Railway Hours Committee in 1892. That right hon. Gentleman did not for a single moment contemplate the possibility of the hours of the signalmen being raised. The right hon. Gentleman in his Report drew the attention of Parliament most strongly to the important and onerous duties of the signalmen; and pointed out the urgent necessity of dealing with them in a generous manner; that none of them should work more than 10 hours; that many of them should work only eight hours, and that even fewer hours of labour in some cases would be advisable. Those remarks showed the spirit in which the Committee's Report was prepared and adopted by the House, and also showed the intention of Parliament in passing the Railways Hours Act; and he therefore hoped that his right hon. Friend would be able to assure them that the Board of Trade were doing everything in their power to defeat any attempts at the evasion of the Act on the part of the Railway Companies. From cases which he had recently brought before the House it was clear that the Companies were endeavouring to make a saving in their wages account by raising to a 10-hour day many signal-boxes which had been worked for years on eight hour shifts, and they were doing this, although the work at these boxes was not less but greater than before. In the case of one railway it was shown that while the hours of the men were formally reduced for week-days, the Company adopted the shabby trick of imposing extra Sunday duty on the men. That was a course of conduct which his right hon. Friend should visit with all the pains and penalties at his disposal. He understood that the Board of Trade did not feel itself free to act under the powers given it by the Railway Hours Act, with a view to shorten the hours of railway servants, unless a distinct and definite complaint of long hours was laid before it by the railway servants. It seemed to him that the interpretation of the Act left it perfectly within the power of the Board of Trade if it obtained information in any way whatever, on behalf of the railway servants, to take all the proceedings authorised under the Act, in order to shorten the hours of labour. He also thought it would be a great satisfaction to railway servants if the right hon. Gentleman—from his place in the House—assured them that any representations made by them, or by anyone on their behalf, under the Act, as to conditions and hours of employment, were treated with the most absolute secrecy by the Board of Trade. It was within his knowledge that the Railway Companies had tried to obtain information of the persons who had made representations to the Board of Trade; and therefore he thought his right hon. Friend ought to take the most stringent precautions to prevent any disclosures in the matter. He also wished to ask whether the appointment of Sub-Inspectors of Railways would be promptly carried out? That was a point of the most urgent importance in the daily lives of railway servants. From figures he had recently obtained in a Return, it appeared that out of 4,615 railway servants killed during the past 10 years, there had been inquiries by the Board of Trade in only eight instances. They required practical railway men to investigate these fatalities, and to be able to state from their own experience their probable causes. It was a matter in which there was a special danger of the Railway Companies endeavouring to influence the Board of Trade to appoint men who would really be the nominees of the Companies. He knew perfectly the feelings of the railway servants on this question, and he could assure his right hon. Friend that the whole power of usefulness of those Sub-Inspectors would be destroyed if there was the least suspicion of their absolute independence, and if they were suspected in any way of representing the Railway Companies rather than the men. He trusted his right hon. Friend would see his way, in appointing these Sub-Inspectors, to choose not only practical railway servants, but men who enjoyed the fullest confidence of the railway servants and their Organisations.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, one remark had been made in the course of the Debate which was liable to be misunderstood. It was said that to a great extent the difference between the railway charges on foreign goods and on British goods was owing to the fact that foreign goods were conveyed in far larger quantities. But that was not so. There was a case pending before the Railway Commissioners which would show that the high rates charged on British goods as compared with foreign goods could not be explained away by any question of large or small quantity; and he himself, when he asked a question on the subject of one of the Railway Companies, was told that there was no rule regulating the amount of the charges according to the quantity of goods carried. The preference given to foreign goods was based entirely on different grounds; and could, as he had said, not be explained away by any argument as to large or small quantities. He thought hon. Members had a right to make a few general observations on the conduct of the Government in dealing with railway matters that came under the control of the Board of Trade. The complaint he made was not against the President of the Board of Trade personally; but he should say that he thought the right hon. Gentleman should put his foot down and insist on securing for his Department a larger amount of the time of the House than was allowed to him.

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member can only call attention to the administrative acts of the right hon. Gentleman. It is not in Order to refer to what he has done or not done in the House.

Mr. TOMLINSON: I desire to call attention to a matter in reference to the Railway Rates Bill which is now passing through Parliament.

The CHAIRMAN: That is out of Order.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he would pass to a point which was clearly within the limits of the administration of the Board of Trade. There had been a disposition for some years on the part of the Board to assume a supposed impartial position between the traders and the Railway Companies, or, as it was described, to hold an even balance between them. He thought that was a mistaken attitude on the part of the Board. The duty of the Board of Trade was to see that traders were not unfairly treated by the Railway Companies; and that duty could not be properly fulfilled if the Board took up the position that they were bound never to interfere between the traders and the Railway Companies. The theory of the Board of Trade seemed to be that the traders had sufficient protection against any injurious action by the Railway Companies in the competition and rivalry between the Railway Companies themselves. But the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that with regard to the question of charges there was now no such thing as competition amongst the Railway Companies. The Companies were welded into one organisation on this question; while on the other side there was necessarily a very loosely-organised body of traders, and under the circumstances he thought it was the primary duty of the Board of Trade to see that traders were not oppressed by the Companies.

Mr. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.) hoped that the interests of agriculturists would not be lost sight of by the Board of Trade on this question of railway rates and charges. It was comparatively easy to organise the traders to fight the Railway Companies; but the farmers by the very nature of their industry were widely scattered over the country, and it was most difficult for them to combine against the rich and powerful Railway Companies. There was the greater reason, therefore, why the Board of Trade should keep a vigilant eye on the interests of the agriculturists. He desired to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to a matter on which he had asked a question before — namely, importation of printed and lithographed matter into this country. The right hon. Gentleman had told him on the former occasion that he did not believe there was any amount of this matter worth speaking of imported from abroad. But he (Mr. Farquharson) had learned that one place of amusement in London had imported £7,000 worth of pictorial mural advertisements from the United States. The right hon. Gentleman then told him that if he could get this information himself there was no need to ask it of the Board of Trade. But surely it was the duty of the Board of Trade to keep an account of the exports and imports of the country; and if no restriction could be placed on the free importation of such matter, at least the printers and lithographers of the country, who were starving for want of work, had a right to know the extent of this importation. He, therefore, asked the right hon. Gentleman to say that in future there would be a separate account of the printed and lithographed matter imported into this country kept by the Board of Trade. There was another point, and one of even larger importance, on which he desired to interrogate the right hon. Gentleman. That was the question of coal strikes. He should say that he had no connection with coal in any shape or form. He thought the right hon. Gentleman could not be fully alive to the intense suffering caused by those coal strikes through the country.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think that is in Order.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: I understood that the question of strikes is a matter for the Board of Trade.

The CHAIRMAN: No; unless you bring home some wrong administrative action, the Board of Trade has no responsibility in the matter.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: I was going to point out the want of action on the part of the Board of Trade in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The President of the Board of Trade has no power to interfere.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: Am I not right in saying that the Board has the power to interfere?

The CHAIRMAN: No; that requires legislation.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: Then I must be silent in the matter. There must be some means, surely, of bringing the matter before the House.

Mr. WARNER (Somerset, N.) said, that for the last 12 months the Board of Trade had been telling them that it was looking after the railway rates. But what had been done by the Board was very little; and, further, it was very unsatisfactory to find that the position taken up by the Board was that of arbitrator between the House and the Railway Companies, instead of putting into effect the desires of the House with regard to the Railway Companies. The position taken up by the Board of Trade in reference to the Railway Companies had been too weak, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to assure the Committee that some more drastic measures would be taken. If the right hon. Gentleman urged that he had no powers, he was sure the Committee would——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. WARNER said, he was referring to the hours of railway servants, and was only showing that the Board of Trade had not shown sufficient energy in its administration of the Act recently passed on the subject. That Act was supposed to have given sufficient powers of control. As yet, the Board of Trade had done little or nothing under the Act.

Mr. BRYCE said, that, on the contrary, a great deal had been done.

Mr. WARNER said, then, at all events, the results of their work were not as yet forthcoming. Every Member of the House knew of numerous cases where railway men worked overtime. At the same time, they were very grateful for so much as had been done. He knew that on the Great Western Railway, where there was a great deal of extra traffic in the boating season, the servants of the Company had often to work for very long hours during the summer time. Men had also to work on alternate Sundays, although extra pay might be given, and that was one of the ways in which Railway Companies evaded the law.

*Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) reminded the Committee that when this question first arose he criticised the way in which the Railway Companies had attempted to deal with it, and he urged the fixing of a maximum of eight hours' work in the signal boxes. They were then assured that the right hon. Gentleman would do his best to get the excessive extra hours of work reduced. On that understanding he did not go to a Division. He thought that the measure had, in some cases, effected a great deal of good. The Chairmen of three large Railway Companies had announced to their shareholders that in consequence of their compliance with the requirements of the Act and the recommendations of the Board of Trade with regard to reduced hours of labour, it had been necessary to increase their staff of servants by one-third in many grades. That was all very well as far as it went, but the improvement was confined to three or four of the largest Companies, and in many cases there had even been evasions of the Act by these same Companies. The Inspectors of the Board ought to take steps to prevent a continuance of the evasive expedients to which recourse was had on some of the smaller lines, which did not pay good dividends. That, of course, was not a consideration to be taken into account in matters where the lives of passengers might be jeopardised on those lines. In some cases where extra signal boxes had been erected, the number of hours had been raised from 8 to 10 on the supposition that the amount of work was reduced. That sort of thing ought to be stopped by the Board of Trade. In other cases where the total number of hours per day or per week had been reduced, the Companies had broken through the six-day-week rule and had adopted a seven-day-week with Sunday work. In other words, what the workmen had gained at the short hours spigot they had lost at the Sunday work bung-hole. The men contended that the Board should not wait for representations to be made by the Trades Unions to them, but "off their own bat" ought to make inquiries into the way the Companies had been evading this Act. The sooner they did that the better for all concerned. It was to the interest of the public that on lines like the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, where the excursion traffic was very large, the men should not be overworked. No man was as vigilant in the discharge of his duties as he ought to be if he was underpaid and had to work for an excessive number of hours. Trains were sometimes sent under the charge of assistant guards and uniformed men who had to be away from their homes 16 hours, with the lives of hundreds of people in their hands, without receiving a single extra penny for their Sunday's work. He urged the President of the Board of Trade to appoint as Assistant Railway Inspectors three or four men who had practical experience as railway servants. To them railway *employés* would be able to make representations which they would hesitate to make to Inspectors receiving £600 or £800 a year, who did not belong to their class and were unacquainted with their modes of thought and their habits. While thanking the House for having passed this railway servants' hours Act, he must urge that there was still room for improvement, and what other Boards had done the Board of Trade ought to be able to do with equal efficiency.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BRYCE, Aberdeen, S.) was glad to acknowledge the way in which the efforts of the Board of Trade had been recognised, and especially what had been said by hon. Members with regard to the courtesy they had received even when the Board of Trade had not been able to accede to their requests. The hon. Member for Essex began by complaining that the Board of Trade had not used sufficiently the power which it had under an Act passed a good many years ago to take proceedings on behalf of traders. That complaint was echoed by several other speakers, particularly the hon. Members for Preston and Islington. He would state candidly the reason for the attitude of the Board of Trade. The Act had not been enforced since 1873 under many successive Administrations, though a great number of cases submitted by both Parties had been decided, and that fact he thought, considering the number of men who had filled the office he now occupied, raised a presumption that there was some strong reason why this weapon had been allowed to remain in the scabbard. One reason was that the Treasury did not think it right that the Board of Trade should put the country to the cost of legal proceedings except in cases where it was obvious that redress could not possibly be obtained unless that were done. It had been suggested that the Board of Trade should support the case of traders before the Railway Commissioners when they had failed to come to terms. But the adoption of this plan would be the most certain method of destroying the whole benefit of the Conciliation Clause. That was the conclusion the Board of Trade had come to. Justice had scarcely been done to the results of the conciliation proceedings of the Board of Trade. He believed they had been of great value in preventing resort to the whole armoury of legal procedure. In many cases not only had the complainant gained the object in view, but he had been saved heavy legal charges. Considering the position in which the Board of Trade stood under the Conciliation Clause, and the duties they had to discharge towards the Companies, the Board would make a great mistake if they made themselves too frequently parties to the disputes between the traders and the Companies. What the Board had no legal power to do they were often, perhaps in 99 cases out of 100, able to do by moral influence with the Companies, and if they assumed a permanently hostile attitude to the Companies they would lose a great deal of the advantage their position now gave them to obtain from the Companies more than they had the right by law to demand. Another point had been made by the hon. Members for Essex and Northampton in relation to the Railway Servants (Hours of Labour) Act of 1893; the Board had constantly, since the Act was passed, been engaged in taking proceedings under it to make the Companies' hours of labour shorter and more in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Whenever it was brought to the notice of the Board, even in the most informal way, that excessive hours were being required, the Board of Trade deemed that sufficient to necessitate inquiry into the case for the purpose of taking action. He thanked the hon. Member for Battersea for the tribute he had paid to the good work done under the Act by the Board; but he wished to remind him that the Board of Trade could not exceed the powers given to it by Parliament, and had to be careful to keep within them, or it would be liable to be pulled up, and if the law needed amendment it would be for Parliament to give the Board further powers, but he could assure the Committee that the powers Parliament had given in the interests of the railway servants and the travelling public would be used in every way. Nothing would be wanting on their part in that direction. He would say a word upon another subject. The hon. Member for Battersea mentioned the desirability of making provision for relays of men. The Board had been considering that point, and also the question with regard to appointing new sub-Inspectors who should be practical men. One of the last acts of his right hon. Predecessor was to obtain the consent of the Treasury to appointing his own Inspectors. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire might rest assured there was no reason to fear that the Railway Companies would be able to put off upon the Board their own nominees. Some 600 or 700 applications had already been sent in, and the Board were now sifting the names. No attempt had been made by the Railway Companies to suggest the appointment of particular persons, and a selection would be made of the best men among the candidates. The hon. Member for Leek called attention to the Metropolitan Railway Company; but the Board were endeavouring to satisfy themselves on the subject with competent advice, and there had been no needless delay. The point had certainly not been lost sight of. He hoped at the next opportunity for answering questions upon the subject that he would be able to supply the necessary information. The other points which had been mentioned by the hon. Member for Dorset would also be considered.

*Mr. E. H. BAYLEY (Camberwell, N.) called attention to the attitude of the Board of Trade with regard to the saving of life at shipwrecks round the coasts. He said the Board of Trade was responsible for this work, but the duty was relegated to a private Society—the National Lifeboat Institution. This Society, which usurped the province of the Board of Trade, consisted of a secretary and other officials, who out of subscriptions were paid salaries unprecedented in liberality for a charitable institution. The Society did its work most inefficiently, but made up for its inefficiency by a vast amount of self-praise and glorification. Whenever a lifeboat accident or break down, or scandal took place, and a Board of Trade inquiry was ordered, the Board, instead of sending an independent and impartial man to make it, sent down an official of the Board of Trade and associated with him an officer of this very Society whose conduct he was questioning. What would be thought of the Board of Trade if, when a railway accident occurred necessitating an inquiry, the inquiry were made through the Railway Company's station-master? He thought such an independent inquiry should be made in all these cases as would be satisfying to the public. When a scandal occurred in a hospital would the inquiry be entrusted to the Secretary or Treasurer of the Hospital? The public would not have the slightest confidence in such a tribunal, but this was exactly analogous to the policy of the Board of Trade when there was lifeboat mismanagement. A particularly shameful instance of this sort of thing occurred in December last. A wreck took place off the coast of Lincolnshire, and six sailors were drowned. He had conversed with coastguardsmen and others, who told him they saw the sailors clinging for hours to the rigging and waiting for help. A lifeboat was on the beach, and a short distance away the crew were regaling themselves in a public-house, where they remained for hours, until the ship went to pieces, and they returned home. A Board of Trade Inquiry was ordered, and the usual farce was gone through. An official of the Lifeboat Institution, who was an Inspector of the very lifeboat in question, was appointed to conduct the inquiry, and with him was associated, for the sake of appearances, a Captain Wilson, of the Board of Trade. He (Mr. Bayley) took the trouble to go down to Lincolnshire to attend the inquiry, and he never witnessed a more disgraceful mockery of a Court of Justice. Respectable eye-witnesses of the wreck were not examined, whereas the crew were called one after the other, and their statements as to not seeing the wreck, &c., were accepted as gospel. The Court reported that there had been no negligence on the part of the crew, but that the coxswain of the boat had committed a blunder in not going to the rescue of the shipwrecked vessel. Fancy allowing six sailors to be drowned, and then mildly speaking of a blunder having been committed! Not content with whitewashing the lifeboat crew, the Court had the incredible meanness to attempt to throw the blame on Mr. Dawes, the coastguard officer, who had been actively at work during the storm in saving lives from another wreck. The inhabitants showed their contempt for the Report by holding a public meeting in honour of Mr. Dawes, and presenting him with a testimonial. He particularly blamed the Court for not taking the evidence of Mr. Gilbert Holden, Lloyd's agent, a gentleman of great respectability, who was an eye-witness of the whole scene, and who repeatedly urged the crew to go to the wreck, and also Mr. and Mrs. Adlard, who again and again remonstrated with the crew. On his return to London he published in the newspapers an accurate report of the facts in opposition to the Board of Trade Report, and the rector of the parish wrote confirming his accuracy, and he believed that every inhabitant of the place was prepared to do so. This system of appointing paid officials of the Lifeboat Institution to investigate their own management was worse than jury-packing. It was the culprit appointing his own Judge, jury, and counsel. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman wished to do what was right, and he hoped that he would stop these bogus inquiries in future, which put the country to expense, and only threw dust in the eyes of the public.

MR. DALZIEL said, he knew he should not be in Order in raising the question of the Scottish miners' strike at the present time; but inasmuch as the right hon. Gentleman had interested himself in an official capacity in the negotiations which had taken place with a view to a settlement, he desired to ask him if there was any likelihood of those negotiations being attended with a satisfactory result? Had he followed the precedent set by his predecessor, in connection with the recent strike in England, of appointing a Commissioner of the Labour Department to make inquiry and collect information in regard to the dispute? He also wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he had received information which induced him to believe that the obstacle in the way of a settlement of the strike, which had now been going on for eight weeks, was that the masters refused to receive and hear the representatives of the men? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to assure the Committee that there was even now some hope of a meeting being arranged between the masters and the men. He was sure that if the right hon. Gentleman could bring that about, it would be a source of general satisfaction throughout the whole of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman would agree with him that the matter was one which should be, if possible, settled without the least delay.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, he did not desire to detain the Committee for more than a few moments; but as representing a railway servant constituency, he wished to express a hope that the Board of Trade would do its best to see that the Act passed last year was carried out. The special matter he desired to call attention to was as to the Railway Companies in London providing cheap trains for workwomen during longer hours than was at present the case. So far back as the 1st of March he had put a question to the President of the Board of Trade, who had promised to call attention to the matter. He (Mr. Morton) had presented a Memorial from lady Guardians in the East of London, and had got a promise from the right hon. Gentleman that the matter would be attended to. As a matter of fact, nothing had been done, and he was afraid the Board of Trade did not intend to exercise their powers. The Board of Trade had power to enforce this if they liked. The Memorial was sent to the Board, presided over by

Sir Henry Oakley, and an evasive answer was returned. It was necessary that the Board of Trade should do something to enable these workwomen to travel to London at a later hour than at present. And he should like to know why the Board of Trade had given him notice that they would oppose his Return Tickets Bill? Why should they take the trouble to inform him that they intended to oppose a useful Bill of that kind? He should have thought that the President of the Board of Trade, if he wished to do his duty, would have assisted him in this matter. He should be glad to have information on this point. He heartily supported the hon. Member opposite who had spoken on the subject of lifeboats. The time was coming when something would have to be done in this regard for the protection of the lives of our sailors and sea-faring population.

*Mr. WEIR said, he agreed that the Board of Trade was a most important Department; and he desired to call attention to the salaries paid, especially that to the President of the Board of Trade. He considered that the salary of the President was inadequate, and that the Department itself was undermanned. He wished to know whether anything had been done with reference to the complaints he had lodged as to the action of the autocratic Highland Railway Company? Something was to have been done last year with regard to this Company, which was paying 6 per cent. on its ordinary stock, but nothing had been done. Another point he wished to refer to was the spaces between the platforms and footboards of the railway carriages on the Metropolitan Railway stations. Owing to the action he had taken in one or two cases the Railway Company had diminished the space; but he wanted to know what the President of the Board of Trade was going to do in connection with other stations on this and other railways? He was sorry that his time did not enable him to go round on a general tour of inspection. Then on another point he had asked a question, as to the sanitary condition of passenger steamers at Glasgow, and had been told that the Board of Trade had not a sufficient staff to inspect the sanitary condition of these steamers. If the staff was not sufficient, the Board of Trade should apply to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for further funds. Another subject he desired to mention was the cost of patents. The outgoings of the Patent Office, he found, were £57,000, while the receipts amounted to £189,700. Could not the right hon. Gentleman see his way to the adoption of some plan under which inventors would be no longer charged such heavy fees for patents? The fees, he was aware, had been largely reduced of late years, but he thought they might be still further reduced with advantage to the public.

Mr. BRYCE said, he could assure the hon. Member for Ross-shire that the Board of Trade was in constant communication with the Highland Railway Company as to the various objectionable features in their administration that he had called attention to. These matters would not be lost sight of. And the Department was doing all in its power as to the complaint against the Metropolitan Railway Company. The question of workmen's trains had engaged the attention of the Board of Trade, and they had been in communication with the Railway Companies on the subject. He invited the hon. Member to come to the Board of Trade some day and see either himself or the officials of the Railway Department, and lay before them details of the proposed scheme, so that the Department might be able to examine it with the hon. Member.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he should be glad to do this; but he had gone to the Board of Trade six months ago, and had offered all sorts of evidence, and finally had sent in a Memorial from lady Guardians in the East of London.

Mr. BRYCE said, that everything had been done which could be done. The Department, at least, was not in possession of the points on which the hon. Member wished it to take action. On the whole, the Board of Trade had not shown an unreasonable disposition in the matter. As to the remarks of the hon. Member for Camberwell, he could not assent to the view he took of the Mablethorpe case. He had gone carefully through the Report of the Inquiry at Mablethorpe. The case had been attended with great difficulties. A number of wrecks occurred about the same time in this district, and the crew of the lifeboat about whom complaint was made, and the horses, had been on duty for 48 hours. It was impossible, therefore, to expect the men to start out again without taking some refreshment. As far as he could gather, the Inquiry was a perfectly fair one, and he thought it was not unreasonable to allow an officer of the National Lifeboat Institution to be present at the Inquiry at the same time as the officer of the Board of Trade. It was that officer's duty, as well as the duty of the officer of the Board of Trade, to make inquiries, and there was no reason to think that the officer of the Board of Trade was unreasonably influenced by the presence of the other official. There was no desire to exonerate the Lifeboat Authorities from blame. It would not be proper at the present time to go into the question of the Lifeboat Institution except to say that it was an Institution deserving the attention of the public. While speaking with reserve on the question of the miners' strike in Scotland—the communications on the subject had been confidential—he might say that from the first there had been complete information as to the progress of the strike. The Board of Trade had taken every step to enable it to understand the full significance of the movement, but communications were now passing between himself and persons in Scotland, including the Lord Provost of Glasgow, on the subject. He thought that the most important point first to be gained was to obtain from the parties an assurance that they were willing to meet together. So far he did not understand that anything had emanated from the masters amounting to a refusal to meet the men. Having regard to the great interests involved, and the extreme suffering undergone by those concerned in the strike, and their families, he trusted that the masters would feel that nothing should be wanting on their part to facilitate an amicable settlement. On the whole, he thought there was no reason at present to take a gloomy view of the position.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, that in regard to workmen's trains the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had now put the matter in a very unfortunate and false position. Two months ago the right hon. Gentleman replied to a question, and said that he was proceeding to do something. He had never asked for further information; and after waiting for six months, now, at this late hour, when everybody was leaving town for five or six weeks, he said he was waiting for more information.

MR. BRYCE said, he had stated that the Board of Trade were waiting for information from others. They were engaged in communication with the Railway Companies direct.

MR. A. C. MORTON said, that the Board of Trade had refused to receive a deputation on the subject of workmen's trains on the ground that they had all the details they wanted. He felt inclined to move a reduction of the Vote in order to enter his protest against the statement of the President of the Board of Trade that he was waiting to hear from him, when the fact was that he had actually refused to receive a deputation.

MR. DALZIEL said, he had to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the statement he had made, and he would only express the hope that he would continue to use his best endeavours to bring about a meeting of the masters and men who were concerned in the Scotch mining strike.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said, he wished to bring forward a matter of some local importance, as to which he asked the President of the Board of Trade a question the other day, *i.e.*, the notice issued—apparently with the sanction of the Board of Trade—prohibiting the removal of sand from Criccieth Beach, because of damage and injury to adjacent land. The right hon. Gentleman, in answering the question, stated that he had received complaints from the Local Board among others, and that an inquiry had been made into the cause of the complaints. But, having written for information on the point, he had been unable to discover that any public inquiry had been held at all. If one had, it must have been of a singularly partial and one-sided character, and he held that in a matter in which the public interest was involved—as well as the interest of the local landowner—the inquiry ought to be perfectly impartial, and the Board of Trade Inspector should take evidence not merely from the owner of the land, but from the public generally. His complaint against the Board of Trade was that it had acted not in the interests of the public, but in that of the landowner solely. And he feared that this was the general practice of the Department, because from the evidence given before the Welsh Land Commission by Mr. Cecil Trevor the action in the Criccieth case was only a repetition of what had occurred previously at Anglesey. The usual course was that when a complaint was made by a landowner that the removal of material from the foreshore was likely to damage his property, the Collector of Customs was asked to report if a *primâ facie* case was made out for the ground of apprehenson, and if the Board satisfied themselves that a *primâ facie* case was made out that removal would damage the property, they allowed the owner to issue a notice in the name of the Board prohibiting such removal, and gave him authority to use the name of the Board in prosecutions. In the Anglesey case a farmer drew sand and gravel from the shore near the residence of Sir G. Meyrick, who made a complaint, and the Board, having apparently satisfied themselves there was a *primâ facie* case, sanctioned the issue of a prohibition. With this the farmer refused to comply, and the Board further authorised the prosecution. The County Court Judge, before whom the case came, made careful inquiry and visited the spot, and in the result decided that there would be no risk of damage to the land in the immediate future. Consequently, the decision was against Sir George Meyrick. It happened that the farmer claimed a prescriptive right, otherwise, as was the case usually with the general public, he would have had no *locus standi.* In the Criccieth case it was possible that no prescriptive right could be claimed, and he ventured to submit that in such a case the Board of Trade should not interfere, because if any legal rights of the landowner were infringed, he had his legal remedy against the builder. Why should the Board of Trade interfere more in the interest of one man than another? It was a very important matter to the little town of Criccieth, for on the shore were the building materials formed, and with the prohibition there would be a great hindrance to building operations. If the Local Board made representation of damage to the land, the Board of Trade would be justified in interfering, but as a body they had not made such representation as regards Criccieth, and the landowner ought consequently to be left to assert his own legal remedy against the builder. What had occurred was, as he was informed, that two or three members of the Board had made representations, because they were interested in the land, but the Board, as a Board, had not interfered. As a matter of fact, there were some very large boulders on this foreshore, and it was in the interest of the public that they should be removed, in order to clear the beach for boating purposes. But this case only demonstrated the general way in which foreshore rights were dealt with. Another illustration he found at Cardiff, where the administration of the Board of Trade had been in the interest, purely and simply, of the Marquess of Bute. The Marquess seemed to have set up a claim to the foreshore near Cardiff, as indeed he seemed to set up claims to most things near there. The foreshore was, of course, most important to the growing town of Cardiff, where development was most rapid, and docks were built year after year. Of vital importance to the town of Cardiff was the foreshore, but what did the Board of Trade do? The Marquess of Bute set up a legal claim, but took no steps to enforce it, not even taking possession, and then the Board of Trade actually compromised the claim, selling 1,200 acres of foreshore to the Marquess for £6,000. That was simply monstrous, and what aggravated the offence was that the people of Cardiff knew nothing of the matter until they discovered that their rights had been bartered away for this nominal sum months after the transaction occurred. He would like to press this matter, because there was a similar instance now going on near Swansea, where the Board seemed terrified at the prospect of litigation with the Duke of Beaufort or some such Duke. They were not taking the slightest step to protect the Town of Swansea, and he ventured to suggest that it was the duty of the Board to consult the Local Authorities before taking any such steps. The right hon. Gentleman should understand that there was no justification for the bartering away of public rights in this shameless fashion. He appealed to the President of the Board of Trade to give him some guarantee that a *bonâ fide* local inquiry would be held at Criccieth, where the interests of the public as well as of the local landowner were involved.

MR. E. H. BAYLEY said, he was sorry to have heard the reply of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to the lifeboat inquiry, because it was entirely different to the information he possessed. He got his information first-hand from the people on the spot; he published it in the Press, and it had never been disputed. On the contrary, it had been confirmed by the rector of the parish, who was prepared to take any trouble to secure that justice should be done. He had hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have shown himself more sympathetic, and not have been ruled by that miserable system of red-tapeism which had apparently controlled his views on the subject. He should, under the circumstances, at the proper time, move to reduce the Vote by £33, the cost of the Mablethorpe inquiry.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON: Will that prevent our moving a reduction in Class III., in regard to the Commercial and Labour Statistics Department?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN (Mr. A. O'CONNOR): The Motion for a reduction on that item should precede one for the reduction of the item containing the costs of the Mablethorpe inquiry?

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) said, he thought they ought to approach a question like this from a broader point of view than his hon. Friend appeared to occupy. No doubt in all great public institutions mistakes were occasionally made. The Lifeboat Institution did very valuable service, and if they gave the vote suggested by the hon. Member it would certainly be misinterpreted. It had been suggested that the officials of the Institution were too highly paid, and a complaint had further been made that when the Board of Trade sent down an Inspector to hold an inquiry the Institution was allowed to send one of its own officers. But surely they were entitled to take such a step in order to watch the interests of their own organisation, with a view to improving it wherever possible. This was a voluntary Institution, which received a vast amount of money from the public, and he believed, looking at its history, no other Institution had done such valuable work.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That does not fall within the administration of the Board of Trade.

*MR. E. H. BAYLEY said, the hon. Gentleman had entirely misinterpreted the object of the Motion. He did not propose to ask the Committee to vote on the merits of the Lifeboat Institution or the services it had rendered. He was simply asking the right hon. Gentleman for a pledge that future Board of Trade inquiries should be conducted by independent and impartial persons.

MR. BRYCE said, he was afraid that he had not understood the hon. Gentleman. He was perfectly willing to give such an undertaking. The result of the inquiry held was that censure was passed upon one person employed by the Institution. He did not think that the presence of an officer of the Institution necessarily prejudiced the inquiry. For his own part, however, he would undertake that any future inquiry should be full, exhaustive, and searching, and would do his best to secure that that was so.

MR. E. H. BAYLEY said, his complaint was that this inquiry was presided over by an officer of the Lifeboat Institution.

MR. BRYCE: No.

MR. E. H. BAYLEY: But it was.

MR. BRYCE: It was conducted by a Board of Trade permanent official. Surely it is not unreasonable that the Institution should have some person present to report on the conduct of their own *employés*. I have given my hon. Friend an assurance that the Board of Trade will be guided by its own officials' opinion in the future.

MR. E. H. BAYLEY: I am sorry to say I cannot accept that as altogether satisfactory. I beg to move to reduce the Salary of the President of the Board of Trade by £33.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £33, in respect of the Salary of the President of the Board of Trade."—(*Mr. E. H. Bayley.*)

MR. HERBERT LEWIS said, that with reference to the question of foreshore administration raised by his hon.

Friend, the Board of Trade should act in a most circumspect manner in these cases with a view to the public interest. It seemed to him that in the Criccieth case the action of the Board was directly adverse to the public interest. The same applied to the sales of foreshore at Cardiff and at Swansea, and the more they looked into past transactions in regard to our foreshores the more they saw a record of jobbery. The public had a right to have fuller information as to the intentions of the Board of Trade when it was proposed to dispose of foreshore rights. In regard to the foreshore at Cardiff and Swansea, there had been a large portion of the foreshore disposed of without consulting the Local Authorities. There had been altogether 123 transactions of this kind, and they ought to see that the Board of Trade maintained a continuous policy in regard to all such dispositions of foreshore property. These transactions could not be too jealously watched. By the present system of not causing inquiry into such matters the Board of Trade were allowing national property to be alienated.

Mr. BRYCE said, that the hon. Member for Carmarthen burghs gave him no notice of bringing forward this subject. He might say generally that no one was more opposed than he was to public rights being infringed upon, and he thought that whatever was done in these matters the Local Authorities should be consulted. He was willing at all times to make inquiries. As regards Criccieth, it was a fact that a representation was made from the Local Board on the subject, but it was found that a sea-wall was required in order to protect land behind it, as it would be found that the land was being undermined.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That was at quite another part of the beach.

Mr. BRYCE said, the representation was inquired into, and evidently a *primâ facie* case was made out. All would agree that the land must be protected, and it was the object and the duty of the Board of Trade to see that that was done. There was, so far as he was concerned, no intention to abridge the foreshore rights of Old England and Old Wales. He confessed, on the contrary, to feeling a keen interest in their maintenance. The Board of Trade had always adopted a practice of consulting the Local Authorities, and whenever a *primâ facie* case was made out the Department prevented the disposal of the foreshore. It was not always desirable to remove boulders from a beach, because there might be cases in which they were a more efficient protection of the land behind than was afforded by ordinary sand and shingle.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (who was received with impatient cries) said, that there was great haste apparently, but this was the only opportunity they had of raising grievances, as it was not their fault Supply had been so long delayed, and he trusted the Government would be good enough to give them what information was asked of them. He agreed that the powers of the Board of Trade with reference to foreshores ought to be administered entirely in the interest of the public, and that notice ought to be given. Now, would the right hon. Gentleman promise them a local inquiry into the Criccieth case, and as to whether the removal of boulders would injuriously affect the land. Would the Board of Trade listen to the representatives of the public as well as the owners of the land?

*Mr. LITTLE (Whitehaven) said, there had been some most shameful transactions by former Presidents of the Board of Trade in regard to the foreshores which had been sold to neighbouring landowners. There was also one in which the foreshore of Southport had been sold to a neighbouring landowner over the heads of the Corporation of that borough, and he thought they ought not to allow the Vote to pass unless they were first assured that in the case of future alienations of foreshore public interests should have the first consideration.

Mr. BRYCE said, that he remembered joining with the Member for Derbyshire, which he then represented, in a Division against a certain alienation. When he was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster he laid down the principle that there should be no alienation of foreshore except for public purposes and after reserving all public rights. He would consider as to granting an Inquiry into the Criccieth case.

*Sir A. ROLLIT said, it was a very material point that notice should be given in all cases to the Local Authority.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS said, that in the Cardiff case no notice was given.

MR. A. C. MORTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would promise that notice should be given to the Local Authorities before there was any sale of a foreshore?

MR. BRYCE: Yes, certainly; that ought to be done in every case.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE asked whether, in the case of a landowner making a claim to a foreshore, the right hon. Gentleman would undertake not to compromise the claim before notice had been given to the Local Authorities, in order that they might have a chance of fighting the case at their own expense?

MR. BRYCE said, that the Board of Trade would be only too happy if any Local Authority would take up such cases.

*MR. WEIR said, he should like to know whether the Board of Trade proposed to do anything to remedy the dangerous state of the platforms on the Metropolitan Railway?

MR. BRYCE said, that he should continue to direct inquiries to be made as to any platforms on the Metropolitan Railway which might be reported to be dangerous. Every power that the Board of Trade possessed to protect travellers would be used.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HENNIKER HEATON said, he wished to call attention to the growing practice of the Government Departments to publish trade journals. He said that *The Board of Trade Journal* had caused much annoyance in the newspaper trade. He had asked the President of the Board of Trade to state the cost of production, the circulation, and the revenue derived from advertisements, and the right hon. Gentleman had replied that he could not furnish the information. Such an answer was very unsatisfactory, and would not be tolerated in any business firm in the world. Surely the right hon. Gentleman need not hesitate to give them the figures with regard to advertising, and so on. The *Journal* had no office rent to pay; its information was supplied for nothing; and it circulated free through the post; and with these advantages it competed unfairly with ordinary newspapers. He would like to hear from the President of the Board of Trade what was the intention of the policy of the Government in regard to these publications in the future?

MR. E. H. JONES said, that *The Board of Trade Journal* paid neither rent nor contributors, and converted the Consular Service into a corps of blackleg journalists. There was no reason why the Board of Trade should put itself into unfair competition with ordinary newspapers.

*MR. JOHN BURNS said, he hoped that the President of the Board of Trade would defend the admirable journals and papers which had been issued by the Government Departments, to deal authentically with such subjects as labour and agriculture, in regard to which a good deal of ignorance prevailed. Trustworthy information on these matters was necessary to the public, and it very often could not be supplied by papers which were in nine cases out of 10 conducted merely for the sake of earning a profit. It was only incidental that the ordinary weekly newspaper conveyed information, and accidentally, at times, the truth.

MR. BRYCE said, it was a mistake to suppose that *The Board of Trade Journal* competed with other newspapers. It was started purely in the public interest, to do that which could not be done in any other way. He could not give the information asked for by the hon. Member for Canterbury. The *Journal* was edited and prepared by members of the Department, and it was impossible to say what proportion of their salaries were chargeable to the *Journal.* The information contained in the *Journal* was supplied by the Consular Service, and the cost of that, again, could not be estimated. Advertisements were only taken to save the public purse. He was glad to think that there was a general feeling in the country that these Government publications were doing useful service.

MR. FARQUHARSON said, he had no objection to the publication of this *Journal*, but he thought they might at least be told what the circulation of it was. Surely that fact must be known.

MR. WEIR said, if the right hon. Gentleman would tell them what was the number of pages used for advertisements and what the number used for news, he dared say hon. Members could judge for themselves what was the financial result.

Mr. BRYCE said, he had not got the information by him.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON said, he could not help thinking that there was evasion on the part of the Board of Trade Department. The question which he had asked was a very simple one indeed; could they not be told what was the cost of production of *The Board of Trade Journal*, and what was the revenue from advertisements? These were things about which there could be no doubt.

Mr. BRYCE: These are matters belonging to the Stationery Department.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON said, he must press for some information. Was there any cost incurred in regard to editorial work?

Mr. BRYCE said, the editing was done by a clerk of the Department. He could not discriminate one charge from another.

*Mr. WEIR asked what was being done to provide a lighthouse which was much needed on the Flannan Islands, which were situated to the west of the Butt of Lewis, in a remote part of the Hebrides, and urged that steps should be at once taken, if nothing had yet been done, to carry out this necessary work.

Mr. BRYCE: The question of this lighthouse has engaged the attention of the Board of Trade for some time on the representation of the Northern Lights Commissioners. There is an increasing traffic round the North of Scotland, and we have it on the highest authority that the erection of a light there would have the effect of enabling vessels coming from America round the North of Scotland to make land more safely. Nothing prevents us carrying out the wishes of the Northern Lights Commissioners except the cost. The cost is now estimated at £20,000, which is a great increase on the former Estimate, and is a very large sum to spend on one lighthouse. We recognise that the building of a lighthouse at this point is one of those things that ought to be done at an early date. A Committee is to consider the question of the lighthouses round our coasts, and if the Report of the Committee should enable us to put the Mercantile Marine Fund in a better position than that which it occupies at present, I shall be very glad.

Mr. Weir

*Mr. WEIR pointed out that it would be quite impossible to spend £20,000 in the first year, and suggested that the Board of Trade should spend £5,000 in the first year and proceed with the work gradually. The site was in a wild and dangerous spot, and the work could only be carried on during the fine weather.

Mr. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.) said, he desired to draw attention to the dangerous condition of the Fastnet Lighthouse. The Irish Lights Commissioners had directed the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the matter, but he was afraid that it had received the same amount of attention that the Calfrock Lighthouse did some 30 years ago. At that time proper attention was not given to the representations made respecting the dangerous condition of that lighthouse, with the result that there was a very serious calamity. It was with the hope of preventing a recurrence of such a calamity that he wished to direct attention to the urgent necessity of taking some action with regard to the Fastnet Lighthouse. On Thursday the Cork Chamber of Commerce passed a resolution calling upon the Irish Lights Commissioners to take immediate action in the matter in connection withthe Board of Trade. Public Bodies in Dublin had done the same, and as the Fastnet was directly in the way of the Atlantic liners and the Channel steamers leaving Cork Harbour it would be most unfortunate if any accident occurred, as it would be bound to have very serious results. He wished to know what course the right hon. Gentleman intended to pursue in the matter?

Mr. BRYCE: This matter is by no means new to me. The hon. Member was one of the deputation which waited upon me on the subject, and I am in constant communication with the Irish Lights Commissioners with respect to it. There is no more important light around our coasts than the Fastnet, and the possibility of any accident happening to it is one which nobody in the House could contemplate without the greatest alarm. I can only say, however, that the matter is receiving our constant attention, and that the only difficulty standing in the way of dealing with it is the difficulty of money. I must assure the hon. Member on one point—the position of the lighthouse is quite as good now as it was some eight or nine years ago.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Cork): Is that the result of any further inquiry made by the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. BRYCE: It is the result of inquiries I made after the deputation waited upon me on the matter. I propose to have further communication with the Commissioners on the subject, and if it is necessary I will make further inquiries, as I am quite sensible of its importance. The expense of rebuilding this lighthouse is estimated at £70,000, and that, of course, would be a tremendous drain upon the funds of the Commissioners. We are therefore obliged to consider very carefully whether we can undertake immediately so great a work. Every possible care, however, is being devoted to the consideration of the subject.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

3. £21,000, to complete the sum for Mercantile Marine Fund (Grant in aid), agreed to.

4. £20, to complete the sum for Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade.

*MR. WEIR said, he wished to move the reduction of the Vote by £5, in order to call attention to the conduct of the Receiver in Bankruptcy in dealing with Companies in liquidation, and also with reconstructed Companies. He could not understand why Jabez Balfour was ever allowed to escape from this country. He thought that if the Official Receiver of the Court of Bankruptcy had used more energy and greater diligence Balfour would not have been allowed to escape.

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not in Order on this Vote.

*MR. WEIR said, he thought the Official Receiver ought to use more energy and diligence in dealing with public Companies.

Vote agreed to.

5. £30,510, to complete the sum for Board of Agriculture.

MR. FARQUHARSON (Dorset, W.) said, that to judge from the attitude of the Government and the President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Gardner) one might suppose that agricultural matters were in a most prosperous condition, that villages were full, that farmers were doing well, and that the President of the Board of Agriculture had nothing to do. Everybody knew that the contrary was the case, and he thought the President of the Board of Agriculture ought to have done many things he had not done. Whenever Members had brought forward matters in connection with agriculture——

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not in Order. The hon. Member must confine himself to the administrative action of the Board of Agriculture.

MR. FARQUHARSON: Then I will deal at once with the question of the administration of the tithe laws of this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. H. GARDNER, Essex, Saffron Walden): I beg pardon; I have nothing to do with the administration of the tithe laws in this country.

MR. FARQUHARSON: All I know is that when I wish to find anything out on the tithe question I have to go to the Office of the Board of Agriculture.

MR. H. GARDNER: With regard to redemption.

MR. FARQUHARSON said, there was an expensive staff kept at the Board of Agriculture Office mainly to deal with tithe questions, and any question with reference to tithe was always referred to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture. His point was that owing to the right hon. Gentleman's remissness in dealing with the Tithe Acts the whole benefit of them had been lost to the agricultural interest. He wished to give instances in point. Some time ago there was a discussion in the House on the Agricultural Estimates, that discussion being closured after two hours by the right hon. Gentleman himself.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I must call attention to the fact that the hon. Member must bring some administrative act against the President of the Board of Agriculture.

MR. FARQUHARSON said, he would proceed to do so. An Essex landowner, Mr. Bence, farmed two small farms, the annual values of which were £52 and £37 10s. The tithe he was called upon to pay——

*THE CHAIRMAN: This has nothing to do with the President of the Board of Agriculture. Is the hon. Member asking for some alteration in the laws?

Mr. FARQUHARSON: No, I am not.

*The CHAIRMAN: He must confine himself to the right hon. Gentleman's administrative action.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: I am in the course of dealing with the right hon. Gentleman's administrative action. On these two farms this gentleman has been called on to pay tithe to the extent of £17 in one case and £14 19s. in the other. Under the Tithe Act which the right hon. Gentleman has to administer——

Mr. H. GARDNER: I beg pardon. I do not wish in any way to escape criticism or to shorten any remarks the hon. Gentleman has to make about me, but I have no control whatever over the valuation of the tithe.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: All I know is that I have referred this matter to the Board of Agriculture, and that the right hon. Gentleman's subordinates there have to administer the Act. This is a matter which must be threshed out on some occasion, and it may as well be threshed out now as at some other time.

*The CHAIRMAN: The Board of Agriculture has nothing to do with this part of the law in regard to tithe. They have only got to do with the redemption of tithe.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: I should like then to know who is responsible for the administration of the Tithe Act? It is vain to say that the Board of Agriculture does not deal with tithe questions. They have tithe maps of every part of the Kingdom in their Office. Here is this man who, if the tithe laws were properly administered, would not pay on more than two-thirds of the annual value of his holding. He obtained the total remission of his Income Tax——

*The CHAIRMAN: This is not in Order. The President of the Board of Agriculture has nothing to do with it. If the hon. Gentleman persists in bringing forward a matter with which the President of the Board of Agriculture has nothing to do I must request him to resume his seat.

Mr. FARQUHARSON: Well, if the President of the Board of Agriculture has nothing to do with the administration of the Tithe Acts I will resume my seat.

***Mr. EDWARDS** said, he wished to draw attention to the question of agricultural education in Wales. He submitted that the grant made was very inadequate when the condition of this country was compared with that of other countries. He found that in other countries enormous grants were annually made for agricultural education, but in Wales the sum was altogether too small. It bore no comparison to the amount granted to England, though Wales more than England depended upon agriculture. Wales was a poor country with few manufactures, and her County Councils, unlike those of England, were unable to give substantial aid to agricultural education. The grant given to the University College at Aberystwith compared unfavourably with the grant given to other Colleges. The Aberystwith College administered to seven counties which were agricultural and poor; therefore, any proposal to improve the agricultural education of the Principality ought to meet with the cordial and hearty support of the Government. No doubt the Bangor, the other North Wales College, got grants, but they did not administer as much as did the Aberystwith College to the wants of the Principality. Though the Report of the Education Department had not yet been issued, he was aware that there was an increase in the amount of the grant made this year. But that was no reason why they should not ask for a further increase. The first grant of £250 was made three years ago, and the progress was so great that by the end of the first year £500 was given. So thoroughly had they taken the work of agricultural education in hand that they now deserved another grant from the Board of Agriculture. He was constantly told by his constituents that the great trouble they had to face was the want of labour, and the complaint made to him was that the children who attended intermediate schools were brought up in such a way that when they left they had a distaste for agricultural pursuits. This compared very badly with the condition of things in France, where there were 79 schools where practical instruction in agriculture could be obtained. The sons of farmers and peasants could in these schools learn the practical work of farming. It appeared to him that when a complaint was made that when the children in the intermediate schools left they gave up agricultural education it was time they did something to enable boys in Wales to have practical instruction in these matters. This instruction would improve the farmers and make them better men, more capable of tilling the ground and of making it productive, and would, in a measure, prevent the drain of labour which went on from the country into the great towns. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture would see his way to meeting his request. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had passed a Bill putting taxation upon land, and he would ask the Government to give some of that money for the education of the agricultural population, in order to keep them on the land.

*Mr. H. GARDNER said, he was in entire sympathy with the hon. Member in his desire to promote agricultural education in every possible way. He would remind the hon. Member that there was a large grant made annually to County Councils which might be expended on technical education, such as dairy and other agricultural education, and which was usefully spent in this manner in many counties every year. He hoped these grants would continue. With regard to the Aberystwith College, he did not think he had been ungenerous towards that institution since he had been in Office. The sum total at his command was simply £8,000; that sum of £8,000 a year was all that he had allocated to the various Colleges and the other Agricultural Institutions that required assistance; £8,000 was all they had to spread over Scotland, England, and Wales. When he first had the honour of occupying the position he now held he found that in 1891-2 £1,000 was all that was given to Wales. In the first year of his Office, in 1892-3, he raised that to £1,300, and increased it to £1,500 in 1894, and he thought hon. Members from Wales would admit that, having raised the grant to Welsh Colleges by 50 per cent. and given Wales £1,500 out of the £8,000 at his disposal, he had not done so badly with regard to Wales. But what had he done for Aberystwith College? He found that in 1891-2 the grant was £250. When he came to consider the important work done by the College and the important work it might do for agriculture in the country in which it was situated, he felt justified in raising the grant in 1892-3 to £500, or just double, and he had increased it by £200 since, so that the College was now in receipt of £700. Various Colleges in other parts of the country, to which he need not call special attention, had had their grants increased, though there were Colleges that did not get so much as £700. He hoped he had satisfied his hon. Friend that upon the whole Wales was not so badly treated.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said, that on behalf of his hon. Friend and himself, he wished to say he made no complaint with regard to the general attitude of the right hon. Gentleman towards the Welsh Colleges; he thought, considering the means at his disposal, the right hon. Gentleman had treated them liberally; but that was not their point, their point being that the proportion of the entire sum which was available for agricultural education was exceedingly small. He found the Committee was asked to vote £46,000, and out of that sum £33,000 went in salaries, and only £8,000 went towards agricultural education. He thought the disproportion between the two sums was exceedingly marked, and the right hon. Gentleman would do well in the future to take steps, not to reduce the salaries, of which he did not complain, but to increase the amount that was given towards agricultural education. He understood that it would not be in Order to move an increase of the Vote; but to show the necessity of an increase in the Vote he would make another criticism. He did not offer any criticism with regard to these Colleges, as he thought they did a certain amount of good; but he thought something more should be done to teach the agricultural population of the country improved agricultural methods, such as improving the vitality of the soil, and that sort of thing. For instance, he did not see any Estimate for a model farm, and he found that in every other country in Europe model farms were provided by the Governments out of the sums placed at their disposal by the State. In this country they spent £8,000, whilst in France they spent £131,000; in Belgium, a smaller country than ours, and not nearly so important, they spent £34,000;

Austria-Hungary £60,000, and Prussia £65,000. In these European countries they not only delivered lectures, but they had model farm schools all over the country for teaching the best methods of agriculture. They also taught forestry, whilst they had no School of Forestry in any part of Wales. For the purpose of teaching the people the principles of agriculture, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer was likely next year to have a good surplus, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to persuade the Chancellor of the Exchequer to devote some portion of it towards improving the agriculture of the country.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I would like to say that I have had to meet £3,500,000 for the Navy, but that is a fleabite compared with what I would have to meet if I had to provide for model farms. I could not undertake to go into a speculation of that description.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS said, he would like to remind the right hon. Gentleman that in Wales the County Council had to provide for a system of intermediate education, and that very little was done for agricultural education. The Welsh Members were of course extremely grateful for the advance already made, but it was simply an instalment of a great debt that was due from England to Wales in that respect; they would be able to prove, if called upon, there was a very great debt due to Wales, and what they had received was really only an instalment of that debt. There was just one other point, and that was in reference to swine fever, in regard to which he had received a large number of communications from various persons in different parts of his constituency. He realised the difficulties of the position of the right hon. Gentleman, but he wished to ask him whether he could give the Committee any information as to the success attending the precautions hitherto taken against swine fever?

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.), on the same subject, said he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would give them some statistics upon the matter, and state whether the districts made any money contribution towards the fund for suppressing swine fever? [Mr. H. Gardner: No.] That was exactly the point he wanted to know. He was told there was a rate in Ireland for the purpose, and he wanted to know what was going on in England. He could not help observing that there was a deal of extraordinary language talked about fleabites. Mr. Disraeli once called the National Debt a fleabite, and now the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that £3,500,000 was a fleabite as compared to what model farms would cost. He should like to hear some details in regard to this matter, as he thought they did a great deal of good. It did not trouble him much whether England had these model farms or not, though he would be glad to see them established in England, as they might then have a chance of getting them in Ireland.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) thought it would be satisfactory if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture would supplement his statement by informing the Committee what other Colleges that were not fortunate enough to be situated in the Principality of Wales shared in the grant and the amounts of them.

*Major JONES (Carmarthen, &c.) said, his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Agriculture referred to the £10,000 that was to be given to Aberystwith College by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; but he would remind him that that was to make good what had been destroyed by a fire. They had been told what the right hon. Gentleman had done for them, and they desired, as far as possible, to strengthen his back against the insidious attempts made from the other side to force upon him the policy of protection; one time urging the marking of bags and another a duty on wheat.

*Mr. H. GARDNER said, that several questions had been asked him which he would endeavour to answer. One was with reference to swine fever, the importance of which he fully recognised. No one regretted more than he did the inconvenience and loss which had been caused in some districts by the very difficult task the Board of Agriculture had to carry out. All he could say was that no one would be better pleased than he should when the time arrived—he hoped it was not far distant—when the general aspects of the disease, and the success that was following their efforts, would enable them to remove the restrictions which he had been obliged to impose. The Committee would remember that the duty of carrying out the suppression of swine fever was passed by a unanimous House. He could assure the Committee that the officers of the Board of Agriculture were doing their best to grapple with this disease, and hoped that before a very long time had elapsed they would be able to grapple with it successfully. The hon. Gentleman opposite asked him a question as to the grants in aid of various Colleges. Well, the Yorkshire College at Leeds had £800, the Durham College £800, the Cambridge and Counties Agricultural Education Committee £400, the University College, Nottingham, £200, the Reading College £150, the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society (for research and experiments) £400, the Eastern Counties Dairy Institute £350. In Scotland, the Glasgow and West of Scotland Technical College received £600, Edinburgh University £450, besides £100 for the Forestry Class, the University of Aberdeen £200, the Scottish Dairy Institute, Kilmarnock, £250, the Highland and Agricultural Society £200, the Aberdeen Agricultural Research Association £100, the Dounby Science School, Orkney, £25. In addition to this, the Board gave two grants, £175 and £150, for special classes in Dairy and Forestry Instruction. His hon. Friend might add those up, and he would find that Scotland had not got the best of it.

COLONEL NOLAN reminded the right hon. Gentleman that he had not answered his question.

MR. H. GARDNER said, that if the hon. Gentleman would turn to the Act that gave them the power, he would find that a large grant was given for the purpose, and, as in the case of pleuro-pneumonia and other diseases, if that grant was exceeded the excess was paid out of local taxation.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that on the last occasion either the right hon. Gentleman or the Minister representing agriculture in Ireland told him that it was not, and he wanted to know whether the money was paid over by the districts.

MR. H. GARDNER said, he had nothing to do with the question of the rating.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he was talking about England, as he could not on this Vote talk about Ireland, and he wished to know if certain districts were locally taxed in support of this in the present financial year.

MR. H. GARDNER: No; it comes out of the general fund.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he wanted to know whether any part of it was paid by local taxation in the district, and whether it was collected by Imperial officers or not?

MR. H. GARDNER said, he could not answer the question, the hon. Gentleman must ask the President of the Local Government Board. His impression was that it came out of the general fund. The grant in aid was given from the Imperial fund towards the relief of local taxation.

COLONEL NOLAN: Not out of a local rate?

MR. H. GARDNER: No.

Vote agreed to.

6. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £90,145, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board."

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE moved that the Chairman report Progress, for the purpose of merely asking how many Votes it was proposed to take to-night. The Local Government Board Vote, the Registrar General's Office Vote, and the Woods and Forests Vote would give rise to considerable debate, and he wished to know whether it was proposed to press these matters on to-night?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

MR. R. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.) said, he also wished to ask whether the Government proposed to take the Scotch Votes to-night?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Yes.

MR. R. WALLACE said, there were questions raised upon the Secretary for Scotland Vote that might lead to considerable discussion. He thought himself it was time to report Progress, as they had done very well to-day.

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT: Of course it may be modified by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but it is intended to take all the Votes in Classes I. and II. remaining, down to the Local Government Board Vote, which is postponed, and to take the Votes in Class III., omitting the first Vote, and all the Scotch Votes, excepting No. 1 and Vote 13 for the Crofters Commission of Scotland. With respect to the proposal of my hon. Friend, I may say that I am quite prepared to discuss with him the Registrar General's Vote and the Woods and Forests Vote, and I do not know there is anything really contentious in them. I hope he will not insist on his Motion.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said, he did not object so far as the Woods and Forests Vote was concerned, or any other in Classes II. and III., but he would press the Chancellor of the Exchequer to leave out the Registrar General's Vote.

*Sir W. HARCOURT: If my hon. Friend desires the question to be postponed I will not stand in his way. We are anxious, and there is a general feeling, that we should get on with Classes II. and III. So far as I can ascertain the view of hon. Gentlemen with reference to the Votes it is that we ought to confine ourselves, as far as possible, to Votes that are not contentious, and if there are questions on particular Votes that require discussion they will not be taken. Under those circumstances, I hope we may be allowed to get on with Classes II. and III.

Mr. R. WALLACE asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would postpone the Scotch Votes, or at all events the Fishery Board Vote and the Secretary for Scotland's Vote?

Mr. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.) hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would listen to the appeal to postpone the Secretary for Scotland Vote, as this Vote afforded the first opportunity they had had of discussing the administration of Scotland, and it would be hardly fair to keep them here several hours.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I am quite ready to offer my right hon. Friend the Secretary for Scotland as a victim, to my hon. Friend, as a sort of Saint Sebastian. We desire to confine ourselves to Votes that can fairly be disposed of. It is necessary for us to get the Votes that have been mentioned already to-night as we have some important Votes to be taken on Monday, and if we are to bring the Session to a conclusion it is necessary for us to go on. The Government are desirous of meeting the views of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House. I am bound to say we have received great consideration from gentlemen on the opposite side of the House, and I only hope we may receive half as much from hon. Gentlemen on this side, and if so then I think we shall succeed in accomplishing the object we have in view. I hope, having made these concessions we shall not be asked to make any more.

Mr. R. WALLACE: May we take it for granted we shall have Monday for the Secretary for Scotland?

Sir W. HARCOURT: No, the Secretary for Scotland for Monday.

Mr. HENNIKER HEATON (Canterbury) asked the right hon. Gentleman not to take the Post Office Vote to-night.

Sir W. HARCOURT: There is no intention to bring that on; my hon. Friend will have a very big gun to discharge on this subject.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) thought the offer of the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to the Scotch Votes was, on the whole, fair, but he would ask him to go one step further and take the Scotch Fishery Board Vote on Monday. He thought very little discussion would be raised upon it, but there were one or two points to be considered, and as the other Votes would take several hours to discuss it was useless for the Scotch Members to remain.

*Mr. WEIR said, he would like to suggest that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should offer another St. Sebastian in the person of the Lord Advocate.

Sir W. HARCOURT: I think my hon. Friend who has just spoken has had his fair share of the time of the House, and I hope he will not think it necessary to continue much more of it, because if half-a-dozen Members take the same share we must sit here for another month. If it is considered that the Scotch Fishery Board Vote will not take long I will throw that in. I hope now that we may regard the bargain as complete.

MR. MACARTNEY asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was intended to sit very late, or whether it was necessary to keep them for the Tramways (Ireland) Bill?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I would have no objection to put that down for Monday.

DR. CLARK asked if it was intended to sit beyond the dinner hour?

SIR W. HARCOURT: That does not depend upon me. We must sit as long as is necessary to get through what remains after the reduction that has been already mentioned.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

DR. CLARK remarked that the Vote included a number of charges for inspection and other matters which were charged on the Imperial Exchequer, and which in Scotland were entirely defrayed from the local rates. He objected to paying for all the particular services in his own country, and also paying, in addition, a portion of the English rates. He should like to know from the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Government would be prepared to take up the consideration of the financial relations between England and Scotland?

SIR W. HARCOURT, in reply, said, at the time the Government undertook to have an inquiry into the financial relations between England and Ireland he was asked that there should also be an inquiry into the financial relations between England and Scotland. At that particular period he was busy on the Finance Bill, and besides that heavy work the officials at the Treasury had to prepare the items of expenditure for the Irish Committee, so that, as he stated at the time, it was impossible for them at the same moment to prepare the figures in respect to the financial relations both of Scotland and Ireland and also with respect to the Finance Bill, and that therefore the Government could not take up the matter of the financial relations of Scotland then, but that they would do so as soon as possible.

MR. HERBERT LEWIS asked whether the Government had in contemplation an inquiry into the financial relations between England and Wales?

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is not in Order on this Vote.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE called attention to a recent appointment of a Poor Law Inspector in South Wales. He said that when the vacancy arose it was urged upon the Government that it was very desirable a gentleman should be appointed who had a knowledge of the Welsh language, but the Government paid no heed to these representations, and appointed a gentleman who did not possess this requisite qualification. Again, Wales constituted one district, which was far too great for one Inspector. He urged the desirability of dividing North and South Wales, and of appointing as Inspector some gentleman who was thoroughly conversant with the Welsh language.

DR. CLARK observed that under the head of district officers he found the cost was about £50,000, and the fees only reached £40,000, showing a loss of £10,000. Surely something might be done to increase the fees of the audit for instance, so as to wipe out this loss, and make this branch of the work of the department self-supporting. In Scotland it was done entirely by the Local Authority.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. SHAW-LEFEVRE, Bradford, Central) said, he had no knowledge of any present vacancy for an Inspector in Wales, but if a vacancy should arise he certainly would bear in mind the question the hon. Gentleman had raised as to the desirability of such Inspector having a knowledge of the Welsh language. He would also bear in mind the suggestion of the hon. Member as to the division of Wales into two districts, and without giving any undertaking he would promise to consider it.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

7. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £272,505, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for Stationery, Printing, and Paper, Binding, and Printed Books for the Public Service, and for the Salaries and Expenses of the Stationery Office; and for Sundry Miscellaneous Services, including Reports of Parliamentary Debates."

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) rose to move to reduce the Salary of the Controller of the Stationery Office by £500. He desired to call attention to the conditions under which the Government printing was carried on, and to ask for protection for the men engaged in that work. He would like to recall to the memory of the Committee the terms of the Resolution with reference to Government work which was passed in 1891 by the late Government and confirmed by the present Government in 1893. In the first place, it stated that, in the opinion of the House of Commons, it was the duty of the Government to make provision against the evils of sweating; to impose such conditions as might prevent abuses arising from sub-letting; and, in the third place, to see that such wages were paid as were generally accepted as current in the district. He thought that the Government printing was carried out, so far as it was done in London, in a way which brought it in conflict with the third provision of the Resolution of the House of Commons. The first provision was rather vague, and dealt with sweating. The second and third were clear and concise, setting forth that it was the duty of the House to prevent as far as possible subletting, and to see that the wages which were generally accepted in the locality as current should be paid for the work that was done. With regard to the Government printing in London, they were in a somewhat peculiar and strong position. There was in London a scale of prices for printing work agreed to, to a very large extent, by those who were engaged in that business. He referred to the London scale of prices which was agreed to in February, 1891, by both masters and men, a copy of which he had given to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Vote, and a copy of which he would be pleased to give to any Member who might desire to see it. According to the scale of prices agreed to mutually between masters and men he found that about 600 of the great printing establishments of London on the one hand, against 24 on the other, paid a scale of wages mutually fixed in the list to which he was referring. Attached to the print of the list itself they found the names of some of the largest printers in London, and they saw not only the names of great private firms, but also of nearly all the daily papers published in London. They had not only the sanction of these large businesses, but he believed some of the great Representative Bodies in London, including the London County Council and the School Board, observed the same rule, and insisted that their printing should be done under the clauses provided in the London list of prices. He thought this provided exactly all the conditions which were demanded in the Resolution passed by the House of Commons. Yet what was the fact in regard to Government printing? At least three-fourths of the Government printing was done by one house, which maintained for that purpose an establishment outside this arrangement altogether, and declined to pay in that establishment the wages mutually agreed upon by all the other great masters in London. He referred to Messrs. Eyre & Spottiswoode. The circumstances would appear more extraordinary when the Committee was made aware that they had got one house which did observe the rule as to the payment of wages which he would refer to as the London scale of prices, but in the second house, in which most of the Government work was done, they refused to accept those prices. He thought it would be recognised, seeing that this one firm did £200,000 worth of Government printing a year, that there was a *primâ facie* case for interference. He would remind the Committee that they had had most distinct pledges on this subject, not only from the late but from the present Government. He would particularly recall the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman stated that it was the wish of the present Government to be in the first flight with regard to its treatment of its *employés.* He (Mr. Lough) recalled that expression of his more than once, and the right hon. Gentleman explained that when he said the first flight he did not mean that the Government should be ahead of the general bulk of employers, but that the Government should be abreast of the general body of employers in any district and should not lag behind. What he (Mr. Lough) wanted to ask with regard to Government printing was that the Government should cease to lag behind and should put itself abreast of the large bulk of employers in the district—so far, at least, as the work done in London was concerned.

The question might be asked why the Government refused to do this, which it seemed to him they were clearly bound to do by the Resolution of the House of Commons? He (Mr. Lough) and his colleagues were able to answer that question, because they tried to get this matter settled in order to avoid taking up the time of the House by a discussion on the Estimates. A month or six weeks ago he had the honour of introducing to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury a deputation on this subject, and after he saw the deputation the right hon. Gentleman wrote a reply which had been widely published in the daily papers, and which he would recall to the memory of the Committee. That reply practically consisted of two arguments. It said, in the first place, that the wages paid by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode were not sweating wages. There was a sentence used very carefully there which said that, taking the work all round and the conditions, the wages paid were as good as those paid in other houses under like conditions. Now, they did not want to take the work "all round" or examine what was paid under "like conditions." The very object of having a scale of prices was to provide protection for the workmen, and what they wanted was that this great firm which got so much Government work should adopt the simple plan of complying with that scale of prices which was universally recognised in the trade outside themselves. On the point as to whether they had paid fair wages or not he had been dealing with facts. He was told with regard to this, that they paid 7d. or 7½d. per 1,000 ens, which was a halfpenny less than other houses paid under the scale. If that were so, it amounted to 6 or 7 per cent. He had been told that with regard to overtime they did not observe the regulations of the trade. He was also told that, with regard to what was called advantageous work, the men did not receive as much consideration as did the men with other firms, and he heard that in the matter of binding the wages were not good. He did not want to go into details. His argument was this: The firm said they were outside the London scale of prices, they declined to work with other employers and come inside the scale; and because they declined to come into line with other employers, therefore they put themselves outside the Resolution of the House of Commons. There was one other argument in that letter. The right hon. Gentleman said that it had always been the policy of the Government to hold the balance even between the Trades Unionists and the free labourers who were outside the Union. Now the deputation, as far as he (Mr. Lough) remembered, did not raise that question at all, and he did not raise it that afternoon. He did not want the Government to depart from that policy of their own of maintaining a perfectly even stand between Unionists and non-Unionists. What he wanted to impress on the mind of the Government was this: Whether the men were Unionists or non-Unionists, they should be paid fair wages within the meaning of the Resolution of the House of Commons, and he said the Government would do best in dealing with this matter if they did not generalise at all or make any points about the duties of or to the workmen. The workmen, as far as he understood, were able to take care of themselves. What the Government had got to do was to take care of themselves, to carry out the Resolution of the House of Commons, and to try and fulfil the pledges they had given. He wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he was willing to make this a fair house within the meaning of all the other houses in London and carry out the pledges he had already referred to? He hoped when the right hon. Gentleman came to answer him he would not say anything about Unionists or non-Unionists. Let them leave that entirely aside, and simply ask that whoever should execute this branch of Government work should be paid the wages current in the district. He thought he had dealt sufficiently with the rather unsatisfactory letter which the deputation received in reply to their just claim. There was another difficulty in carrying out the Resolution in this particular matter. The right hon. Gentleman had said that some contracts lasted for 10 years, that they were entered into in 1886, and did not expire until 1896. He would like to remind the Committee that if anything was to be done to prevent a renewal of long contracts of this kind, now was the time to do it. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman, when he replied, would be able to announce that the Government were going to take such steps as regarded the future contracts as would prevent these evils being renewed. He wished also to ask the right hon. Gentleman were there any other contracts going on at the present time as well as these long contracts, which lasted for 10 years? He held in his hand a form of contract issued by the Treasury, and on it the House of Commons Resolution was printed. He was afraid, so far as this particular work was concerned, it was a Resolution that was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Why was this printed on the contract form? Why did it exist for printing if contracts were not being given out from time to time? He would like the right hon. Gentleman to deal with that proposition. It was currently supposed there were other contracts going on from time to time, and he wanted a promise from the right hon. Gentleman that he would see that the work should be paid for under the London scale of charges. The announcement on the contract form as it now stood was not sufficient, and he would suggest that beneath the Resolution of the House of Commons it should have some such words as these—

> "In this contract the words 'such wages as are generally accepted as current' shall be taken to mean for all work executed in London, the wages fixed in the London scale of prices signed and mutually agreed upon at the Stationers' Hall, between representatives of the London masters and the London men."

He hoped he had not kept the Committee too long. He would sum up by putting four questions to the right hon. Gentleman. Firstly, as regarded these printing contracts, did the Government or did they not recognise the London scale of prices which was observed so widely throughout the Metropolis, 90 per cent. of the trade observing it? Secondly, did the House of Commons Resolution which he had quoted not require that the London scale should be paid for such work of this kind as was executed in London? Thirdly, whether the right hon. Gentleman would give a pledge to insert in all new contracts which the present Government or he might agree to some words requiring that the current wages in London should be paid? and, fourthly, would the Government take steps to see that when the present long contracts expired, in any future contracts that might be entered into for a term of years the same provision was inserted and observed? He could not sit down without admitting that the right hon. Gentleman who represented in this matter the Treasury Bench had met both the deputation and himself at all times with the greatest courtesy. He thought they had persuaded him of the justice of their claim, but he felt that he (Sir J. T. Hibbert) had to deal with an exceedingly cast-iron Department, though one that, in some respects, very well represented the permanent Departments of this country. He could not help saying that in this matter of the consideration of the wages of the humbler classes the Department had displayed a want of sympathy. He saw that the salary of the Controller was £1,500 a year. He did not say that that was too much, or that he was not a most capable officer. But he said that in regard to the humbler workmen in their employment who did not get a large salary and had no pension they should at least pay them fair wages, and, with a view to increasing the sympathy of the Controller with his workmen, and of giving his right hon. Friend an opportunity of replying to the points he had raised, he begged to move the Amendment he had put down.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Controller."—(*Mr. Lough*).

*THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir J. T. HIBBERT, Oldham): I think it will be considered desirable that I should reply at once to this question after the speech which has been made by my hon. Friend, and that I should state what is the position of the Government in respect to this question. I do not at all complain of what my hon. Friend has said, or of the questions he has asked me as regards the future. But before I deal with the questions he has put to me and the remarks he has made, I should like to bring before the Committee the fact that the printing contracts were made in the year 1886, during the time of the late Government, and these printing contracts were all for a term of 10 years. These contracts are seven in number. They were not all taken by the firm to which he has referred—Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode—but some of them were taken by houses that are called fair houses. I believe that the Government printing was divided into seven groups at that time, and four out of the seven contracts were taken by Union houses, one by the great firm of Hansard and Son, two by Darling and Son, and one by Harrison and Son. So you see that Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, having taken over the business of Hansard and Son, hold three of these contracts, while the other three Union houses hold the remainder. The estimated value of the contracts taken by the Union as compared with the non-Union houses is as follows: The three taken by the Union houses are £49,588, as against £50,000, the value of those taken by the non-Union houses. I merely mention those figures to show that there was competition when these contracts were invited, and that they were not all taken by the house of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. The question is, what is the position of the Government with respect to these contracts? They were taken, as I have said, in 1886 for 10 years, and they do not expire until December of 1896, so that they have two and a half years to run, and my hon. Friend has asked me to agree to the proposal he has made—namely, that I should agree that no future contracts should be made except upon the basis of the London scale of prices. He is asking me, as I think rather unfairly, to undertake a decision upon that matter. I am at present Secretary to the Treasury. Of course I do not think that I shall be Secretary to the Treasury—I think it is very improbable—at the end of the two and a half years, when these contracts expire. All I can say with perfect freedom is that that would make four years' work at the Treasury, which I do not think I am quite likely to agree to undertake. Be that as it may, the Committee will agree with me that I could not undertake to pledge my successor, and I cannot undertake to pledge the Government which may be in Office with respect to the proposal which he has made. But I am quite prepared to meet my hon. Friend a great way. I do not say I can give him all he asked, because I do not think it would be fair for me to do so, seeing that the contracts do not expire until the end of $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. But I am perfectly willing—and I think it will be much the best way of dealing with the question—to agree that a Select Committee shall sit either the next year or the year after to consider this question of the printing contracts, and to see in what way, in future, they shall be given, so as to come within the provisions of the Resolution passed by the House of Commons in 1891. I should like to give what I think should be the form of Reference. Of course, I do not mean to commit myself nor any person who holds my place to the exact words, but I think a Reference of this kind would meet my hon. Friend's proposal—

> "To report whether the present system of issuing invitations for tenders and of making contracts for Government printing effectually secures due compliance with the terms and spirit of the Resolution of the House of Commons of the 19th February, 1891, with regard to the wages to be paid by the contractors, and whether, and if so what, improvements of the system is called for."

Something like these words are what I should suggest. My hon. Friend has referred to the letter which I sent to the deputation which I received, and he has said that that letter was unsatisfactory. I dare say that a large number of persons might view it as unsatisfactory. I wrote that letter with the information I had before me, and I do not know that I could have done otherwise than write as I did. It had been said of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode that they were not paying the London scale of prices, but I was informed by that firm that they were paying wages equal to the London scale of prices, and I felt it was my duty to put that statement in my letter so that it might go before the deputation. Since I wrote that letter, in July, I made further inquiries. I have seen two members of the firm, and I have also inquired more particularly to get full details of the wages paid in that establishment; but though I asked and pressed for details to bear out what the firm stated to me, I must confess I have not been able to get these details, which I think I ought to have if I am to make myself responsible for the act of that firm. Having arrived at that conclusion, I ask myself how far ought I to go to meet my hon. Friend, and my answer is that I offer this Select Committee, which shall take what evidence they think proper, and shall consider how these contracts shall be given in the future. If that Committee think proper to recommend that these contracts shall only be given to firms which agree to pay the London scale of prices, well and good. I think that would be a very satisfactory arrangement for all parties. But whilst I say that, I must also say that I do not consider myself to be in a position to give any such undertaking, or make any such proposal. I admit this—that a large proportion of the houses engaged in book-printing in the Metropolis are what are called "Union houses." I believe that in 90 per cent. of the total number of those houses both masters and men accept the London scale of prices. That is a very strong factor; and it is a factor that must have due effect given to it by any Committee which considers this question. Of course, I leave the matter to them; but I will go a step further, and say that I consider that any new contracts that are made before the Committee reports ought to go on terms which would be within the spirit and the words of the Resolution of this House. I trust that undertaking will be sufficient for my hon. Friends, and for the Committee. I can assure them that I have given the greatest attention to this subject. There is no question connected with my duties at the Treasury which has taken up so much of my time, or required so much of my time, and upon which I wish to act as fairly as possible than this question of the rate of wages to be paid by Government contractors. I could have gone into the question at much greater length; but I do not think it is necessary at this time of the night; and I trust the way in which I desire to meet the case will be approved of by the Committee.

Sir A. ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said, that as a member of the deputation who waited on the right hon. Gentleman on this subject, he desired to thank him for the disposition, at any rate, which he had evinced to meet all reasonable requirements in the matter. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for West Islington (Mr. Lough) that the letter written by the right hon. Gentleman was not satisfactory on certain points; but that letter had been reconsidered in the light of new facts, as he understood, and now the right hon. Gentleman had come to a conclusion which, on the whole, having regard to the difficulties of the position, would probably meet the case. They had allusions that afternoon to the condition of the lithographic trade. They had it pointed out that very large quantities of posters were imported into this country. He believed that statement was correct, and he believed the true foundations of commercial prosperity were—fair wages paid, and good relations established between employers and employed, although having regard to the terms of the Resolution of the House the Government had not succeeded in setting the best example in the matter. The question was not a question of Unionism or otherwise. It was simply a question of acting on the Resolution of that House, which said that the current wages of the trade should be paid in Government contracts; and so far as he was able to gather from representations which had been made to him by his constituents—many of whom were engaged in this trade—Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode themselves in one of their establishments—though not in the other—had adopted the scale of prices which had been accepted by a very large portion of the trade. The only difficulty was in connection with the existing contracts, and that difficulty, so long as these contracts lasted, was insuperable. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had done his best to persuade the contractors to a modification of the terms. He thought that modification might have been made wisely, and in the end economically. But if the right hon. Gentleman could not persuade people to do so, he (Sir A. Rollit) did not know who could, having regard to his persuasive manners towards Members of that House. The right hon. Gentleman had promised a Committee to consider the whole question of the printing, and to devise a system of contract under which the Resolution of the House would be carried out. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman, for though he had not wholly realised all that they wished—for that was beyond his power—he had offered a solution of the difficulty which they ought all to accept.

Mr. J. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, there were few recognised rates of wages so clearly understood as the scale of prices of the London printing trade; and, that being so, it would be extremely easy to fulfil the Resolution which the House adopted some time ago, when new contracts were going to be made with respect to Government printing. There could be no doubt that the letter which the right hon. Gentleman wrote some time ago was wrong in some of its expressions as to facts; and though the right hon. Gentleman had not been able to get from the firm the exact facts of the matter, there had been furnished to him by the Society of Compositors some of the leading points of difference in the prices paid by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode and the London scale of prices. He would only mention two of the points. The price for composition per 1,000 "ens" under the London scale was from 7½d. to 11½d. The price per 1,000 "ens" for composition, whether in small or large type, paid by this firm was only 7d. Again, under the London scale, overtime between 7 and 10 o'clock was paid for at the rate of 3½d. per hour, and afterwards at a still higher rate; but there was no overtime, except for all-night work, allowed by the firm in question. Those were clear departures—he would not say from the London scale of prices, because that might be the scale of a small body of trades—but from the London scale as paid by 90 per cent. of the printing trade of London; and he would urge on the right hon. Gentleman, if he was prevented from touching existing contracts, to at any rate take steps, with regard to contracts made in the meantime, to have the London scale of prices clearly recognised as the fair wages generally paid in the trade in London. The printing trade of London had been enabled to work with great smoothness on account of the mutual arrangements come to by the agreement of masters and men on this scale of prices; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would recognise and would understand that the Government could take no fairer step in the matter than simply to recognise that if they adopted that scale they would be acting up to the Resolution of the House.

Captain NORTON (Newington, W.) said, that as the constituency which he represented happened to contain practically the whole of the printing trade—for he had over 1,000 electors connected with the trade—he desired to say a few words on this subject. Some time ago he formed one of a deputation which waited on the right hon. Gentleman, with reference to the bookbinding trade, to complain of the action of one of the most important of the firms who did this class of work for the Government in taking the work out of London into the country to a place where there was a firm which employed a large amount of female labour. This firm got women to do what was generally known in the trade as men's work, at, of course, a lower rate of wages. The men looked upon that as another form of sweating, and as being opposed to the Resolution of the House of Commons. He had received during the past week scores and scores of letters from his constituents on this subject. They failed to understand all those niceties of reasoning; they looked at the question from their own standpoint, and as it would seem that a large portion of the Government work was done by unfair houses they naturally complained. They, therefore, asked the Government to give a pledge that the work would only go to those houses which paid a fair rate of wages, and if that pledge was given they would ask for no more.

Mr. LOUGH said, he wished to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had met them in a very sympathetic spirit. He was sure the Committee would recognise that the right hon. Gentleman had gone a step further than in his letter, and had made, on the whole, a very fair proposal. He had examined the proposed Reference to the Committee and he found that really covered the matter so far as the contracts running for a long period were concerned. He desired to thank the right hon. Gentleman for having so fairly met them in that respect. But he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would add one word more on another point. He thought sufficient evidence had been laid before him to prove that the London scale of prices was universally adopted throughout the trade; and they asked of him that while in Office, in the case of any work not covered by the long contracts, he would see that the wages paid were according to the London scale. He assumed that the Committee which the right hon. Gentleman would give them next year would report before any new contract for a term of years was entered into.

Mr. M. AUSTIN (Limerick, W.) said, that last year on the Irish Estimates he questioned the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury as to the conditions of work in the Government printing offices in Dublin. Unfortunately, he was not successful in impressing upon the right hon. Gentleman the necessity for some reform in those offices; but this time he stood on surer ground. The House had adopted a Resolution against sub-letting of Government contracts, and he would show that in the case of the firm with which they were now dealing there was sub-letting. He was struck by one observation made by the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman said the firm would not go into details. But being a practical printer himself he could go into details, and he would show that there was no Department of the Government more difficult to shove on in the path of reform and progress than the Stationery Office. The conditions of work in the firm of Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode could be stated in a few words. The work was first put into the hands of taskmasters on behalf of the firm. Those taskmasters then settled the prices for the work, and they went around to the "clickers" (which was a technical term in the trade for deputy-foremen) of the various companionships consisting of from 15 to 20 men each, and asked them the price for which they would do the work. Now, here was a system of sub-letting far more pernicious than that condemned by the Resolution of the House of Commons, for the workmen themselves were placed in competition with each other. It did not require a Committee to see the gross injustice inflicted on the associated employers of London by this system. Again, with regard to wages, what was the position? While the price paid for composition per thousand "ens" was 7½d. by the associated employers, only 7d. was paid by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. Here, then, was a very gross violation of the Resolution of the House of Commons in favour of the current rate of wages being paid under Government contracts. Surely the right hon. Gentleman need not wait for the deliberations of a Select Committee to prevent those abuses of the Resolution of the House. In the new form of contract in Her Majesty's Office of Works for London and district it is expressly declared that—

> "The contractors shall not assign or underlet the contract or any part or parts thereof, without the consent of the Commissioners being first obtained, and shall not make a sub-contract or sub-contracts for the execution of the work of any part or parts thereof, or"

—and it was to this he wished to call the particular attention of the right hon. Gentleman—

> "or employ any taskmaster in or about the works or repairs."

Mr. M. Austin

That was the case for the Society of Compositors; and they thought that without waiting for a Committee they should have an express declaration that the system adopted by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode was detrimental to the interests of the compositors, and was contrary to the Resolution of the House; and that it was high time for the Stationery Department to make a more energetic attempt to grapple with this question, and not to wait for a Committee whose deliberations may extend over a series of years and end in nothing. Before he sat down he might acknowledge with thankfulness the help given to them by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Colonies (Mr. S. Buxton) in all matters affecting the printing trade.

*Mr. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) said, the previous speakers had given at much length and with great accuracy the reasons why some action should be taken in this matter by the Secretary to the Treasury. He knew the House was anxious to get away; and he should not, therefore, go over the ground which had been traversed by hon. Gentlemen before him, and which, in the main, he endorsed. But he wished to point out to the House that this was not only a question that dealt with the wages, hours, and industrial conditions of the printers and men engaged in the stationery, printing, and bookbinding in connection with the journals, papers, and other documents that were required for this House and the various Departments of the Government. If the Committee which the Secretary to the Treasury had promised them simply dealt with wages, hours, and conditions of employment—though these were very proper questions for inquiry, he must say that from the House of Commons point of view that would not be sufficient. He trusted that that Committee would not sit longer than three or four months, because it could well do the whole of its work within that period. He trusted that the Committee would consist of practical men, and that the Secretary to the Treasury in the nomination of that Committee would avail himself of the technical and expert knowledge of the printing trade now in the House. He also trusted that the terms of Reference to that Committee would go much further than the right hon. Gentleman had proposed. He would tell them why. He believed that the system under which the printing was done was, economically and intrinsically, bad. He believed that the system of contract needlessly harassed the officials and oppressed the men, and that if another system were adopted the public and the ratepayers would be benefited; the House of Commons would get its printing done much cheaper and much better; there would be better binding—work that would last would be turned out; employment would be spread over a larger number of men, and a large sum of money would be saved which was now spent in printing such a large number of Government Reports, documents, and Blue Books, which speedily went to that bourne from which no traveller returns—so far as those things were concerned—the waste-paper basket and the cheesemonger's shop. He therefore asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he would not widen his Reference to the Committee, so that the Committee would inquire whether the House of Commons should not abolish the contract and tender system for printing and bookbinding altogether and do its own work itself? He wished to direct attention to the gross extravagance of the Stationery Department. That Department was established for the purpose of superintending the printing under the contract system, and to do that it received an amount equal to the revenue of a small European State, for the Treasury paid over to that Department over £600,000 a year. More than that, they found that there was an annual increase which ran from £7,000 to £14,000. Last year it was £14,000, which, if properly spent, he admitted, was a good sign; for the amount showed a tendency to increase rapidly as the desire for information spread amongst the people. This enormous sum was divided up between about 12 contractors, of which two or three got the bulk of the printing, one firm alone getting £250,000 of the sum. How was the Vote for the Stationery Department divided up? For printing for the Public Departments there were £186,000; paper for same, £167,000; binding, £60,000; printing, binding, and paper for the two Houses of Parliament, £77,000; small stores, £58,000, and Stationery Office publications, £25,000; so that £592,000 were spent, or were supposed to be spent, in London alone? What happened under this system? The contracts were signed for a long term of years, and the conditions would not permit of one firm doing all the work, though it would be of advantage to the officials, he was told, if it could be done by one firm. Contracts were made for five and ten years, the result of which was that paper being reduced in price considerably every year—the price of paper to-day as compared with 10 years ago being 75 per cent. cheaper, generally speaking—large profits went to the contractors on the paper that they supplied, small though it was; whereas if the work were done by the Government the markets could be utilised and the printing could be done much cheaper than it was done at present. As apart from paper being reduced in price, nearly all the other accessory materials were reduced as well. The salaries, wages, and allowances of the Stationery Department amounted this year to £26,730, being an increase of £580 on last year. They paid, independently of that, £3,500 for horses, carts, and carriages employed in carrying this contract printing about. They contracted for books in this way: suppose 100 Reports of a certain character were wanted in January, that number was printed by the contractor at a high price; in the course of the year more copies were required, and perhaps an order for 3,000 copies was given, for all of which they paid at the original price per 100, whereas every practical printer knew that the price of the 100 copies ordered in January was from 40 to 75 per cent. higher than if 3,000 copies were taken right off. That was typical of other instances. Then look at the salaries paid in the Stationery Department. The Controller was not a practical printer; he was, he believed, a gentleman who left the Bar, or rather the Bar left him; and he got £1,200, and £300 in lieu of a residence surrendered. The Assistant Controller got £600; and he found that for the superintendence of the Government printing 15 persons took between them £7,679. He ventured to say that Eyre & Spottiswoode, Harrison, Vacher, or any of the other great printing firms, did not pay for the practical superintendence and manufacture of the million's worth of work they turned out every year the average salary that these men divided up between them simply for examination alone. Remember, also, that the bulk of the men were not practical printers, and that the knowledge they possessed was merely theoretical. To the professional staff £2,840 was paid. So that there were for purposes of supervision 59 persons to look after the contractor, considerably in excess of what would be required if without the contractor the work was done by Government direct. Passing from the extraordinary amount of money paid for supervising the contractor to the contractor's work, he would take first the Postmaster General's Department. He frequently saw Postmasters in different places, and had asked them about their printing and stationery. That, he found, was very unsatisfactory. The general complaint of Postmasters throughout the country was that the *Post Office Guides* were not got up as they should be. The *Guide* was very badly got up indeed, and, so to speak, it was difficult to see the paper for the ink on it. Taking as a specimen the one issued by this particular Department in July, 1894, if it were to be put into the hands of any practical printer, he would say at once that it was a piece of work for which from its appearance good wages could not have been paid, and that it must have been produced under conditions which allowed of the work being scamped. Next came the Reports issued by the Army Medical Department. Here, again, was a book produced for the Government under the contract system, and he would ask anybody to compare the Army Medical Department Report for 1892 with any of the documents produced by the United States Government in their own Government Printery with direct employment of labour—employing their own men. As he believed that this was the only branch of the United States administration that he ever praised in his life, he hoped the Committee would take it on this occasion for what it was worth. He had, next, one of the United States Departmental Reports; it was an admirable work, well got up, and any one would admit at once that there was no comparison between the character of the printing produced at the Bureau of Labour at Washington and the heap of Blue Books issued from Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Next, he would go to the Mines and Minerals Statistical Report for 1893. It had just come to hand, and he said again if any practical printer looked at that Report, either as to the quality of the paper, printing, make-up, and, he might say generally, the industrial and mechanical character of the Report, it was not to be compared for a moment with similar work produced elsewhere—for instance, in New South Wales. Here in this country, where they produced vast quantities of minerals by millions of tons annually, we sent out a Report issued by the Government which, as compared with the Report produced even under the contract system in New South Wales, was a positive disgrace; and beyond question no comparison whatever could be instituted between the two books, and the superiority of the New South Wales Report over that which was produced for the English Government was indisputable. Going a little further—to New Zealand—it was the same thing; and it was just the same throughout the Colonies and in other countries. He had got at home—he was not able to bring them all down to the House—something like 30 or 40 official Reports and Blue Books issued by various Governments throughout the world; and whether they came from New South Wales, New Zealand, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, or the Bureau of Labour in America, wherever the documents were printed directly by the Government in their own Printery there was no comparison as to the quality of paper, type, make-up, and general appearance and character of the work. He earnestly appealed to the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in face of all this, he would not allow this Committee to widen the scope of its Reference—whether it should not be made a little more exhaustive, so that the House might see whether by an investigation into these matters they could not see their way to adopt some other system whereby perhaps more money would be spent on the production, in a better form, of really valuable Reports, while at the same time effecting a great saving in almost useless and badly-produced works. It was not merely Trades Union rates of wages that he asked for, but the adoption of a better means than this tender-and-contract system, and so getting better work done. That was what they, on behalf of the actual workers, asked of Her Majesty's Government; they asked it so that working overtime might be abolished; and the work to be done would then be spread over a larger number, and done under better conditions. That was very necessary in the printing trade. There was not a trade in London where the physical conditions were worse than among the compositors, printers, machine-minders, and printers' devils. Printing was done in London for the Government, under conditions of gas-laden atmospheres, unhealthy surroundings, insanitary conditions, and long hours which the Government ought not to allow. Yea, more, if good workshops could be found for war material at Woolwich, model workrooms should be found under Government for its own printing. Therefore, from every consideration alike of economy, health of *employés*, and greater efficiency in the printing done for these Departments, he trusted the Government would do something to accede to his request. He came now to the last point which he had to mention, and that was in connection with the Committee work. What did they find there? They found the same system of contract with regard to the shorthand-writing, which was sub-let and farmed out in a most extraordinary manner. Let him give an instance. Supposing they were sitting on a Private Bill Committee upstairs on any particular day. What happened? Not a single word or line of the evidence taken before that Private Bill Committee had reached the hands of the compositors and printers until 7 or 8, and more frequently 9, o'clock at night. Now that ought not to be the case. The printing for that House ought to be done under different circumstances, so that the notes taken by the shorthand writers could be sent away to the printers as was done on all newspapers. The notes should be sent off early enough for proofs to be produced, so that the Committee clerks upstairs, and others, might have an opportunity of seeing them before 9 or 10 o'clock at night. What did the newspapers do? If there was any particular incident or occurrence in that House as late as 1 o'clock in the morning all Fleet Street was apprised of it two hours afterwards. If that could be done by the newspapers, surely the printing of their Private Bill Committee work ought not to wait seven or eight hours—until 8 or 9 o'clock at night; but the printers and compositors should be able to get the work earlier, and instead of having to work through the night and walk home they should be able to catch the last trains and get away to their homes. The existence of the present condition of things was entirely due to our scandalous system of farming out the shorthand work. The shorthand writers upstairs were supposed to be the servants of a firm which had the practical monopoly of this particular work, for which they were paid at a rate which amounted to 20s. per *Times* column. Any one of those shorthand writers only got 11s. 3d. as a maximum price per column if he wrote out his notes himself. He never could get more than 11s. 3d. If he dictated the notes he only got 10s. per column. What did that mean? The man who got the contract and farmed it out again got a sovereign for the 11s. 3d. which he paid to the actual shorthand writer. The contractor's answer to that before the Committee was—he had the evidence in his hand—that he paid 6s. 3d. more out of the sovereign for expenses; but it was the opinion of everyone engaged in that business that that 6s. 3d. should be knocked down to 2s. or 2s. 6d. Then there was an attendance fee paid, and for simply saying that he was the employer of the shorthand writer the contractor got 50 per cent. of the attendance fee — the servant of the man who had the monopoly getting an attendance fee only of 10s. 6d. per day for his work upstairs. That was the kind of farming which went on, and which this House ought to stop. They gave a monopoly to Mr. Gurney, who, as contractor, made 50 per cent. out of what the shorthand writer earned; and even if it were admitted that he was entitled to reckon 2s. 6d. for expenses, there was a clear case of 6s. profit out of every sovereign which he was paid by the Government. That was independent of the 10s. 6d. he took for attendance. A better system should be introduced by the Treasury. They ought to have a staff of shorthand writers of their own working upon a rota, and those men should be paid the customary, or what might be called the Trades Union, rate of wages. They should be paid for the work they actually did, instead of getting only half the money paid for it; and Her Majesty's Government should not allow one man to have a monopoly of this or any other work under such conditions. That was one of the bad effects of the contract system of doing the Government work. He appealed, therefore, to the right hon. Gentleman to widen the scope of inquiry by the Committee and to give them the opportunity of going into the whole matter. Of course, he did not expect a promise from the Government, through the Secretary to the Treasury, that any great change would be made at once, because this was no doubt a very important question indeed. It involved an expenditure altogether of nearly £1,000,000 sterling, and the Cabinet would have to consider it. This would have to be made a Government question before they could resolve on a new departure and say whether in shorthand writing, in printing, or in supplying stationery they would not have their work done absolutely by Government servants under the best conditions, in the interest of good work and efficient economy.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT: Sir, I think we are all indebted to the hon. Member for his able contribution in this matter. I am sure everyone will admit the great amount of experience and practical knowledge he has brought to bear upon this question. He has afforded us a great deal of information in the different departments of work he has dealt with. With respect to the most important point, that of the Government undertaking its own printing, that is, of course, a serious matter, and I am glad to hear from the hon. Member that he recognises it is really a very important departure. It is, I think, a question very well worth consideration, and deserving of every attention both by the Treasury and by the Cabinet itself, as to whether any change should be made. I hope, if on consideration they should be willing that this important general question should be referred to the same Committee, to be inquired into with the question of printing, that the hon. Gentleman will be a Member of that Committee, and that he will help to bring forward the question and have it thoroughly threshed out in every way. All the other points he has mentioned are also, I think, well worthy of considerstion. As to the cost of printing Blue Books, I admit that it is very great. We waste a lot of money every year on Blue Books; for, while some are unquestionably of great value, others are almost worthless; and I think with a little more care we might arrange to have fewer Blue Books issued, and so be able to spend more upon those which are produced. That would be to the advantage of the public in every way. England, I quite agree with the hon. Member, ought not to be behind other countries, and even our own colonies, in this matter. Then, with regard to the Reports of Committees, I think they should be brought up earlier, and that as far as possible the night work now necessitated should be avoided by employing a larger staff in issuing the Reports. In that way the night work might be to a great extent avoided. All those are points which are well worth consideration, and I would go as far as to say that the employment of men in the way mentioned by the hon. Member should be made a point of reference to the Committee. I think there is a great deal to be done in the direction of such an inquiry; and if the Committee has upon it gentlemen who understand these different branches of business, I believe we shall be able to go some way towards doing a great work for the benefit of those concerned, while at the same time economising the funds of the State. With regard to what was said by the hon. Member for Dublin as to sub-letting contracts, we cannot, I am afraid, interfere, as to the sub-letting of any part of the work in any way, with the holders of existing contracts. The hon. Member will, I think, fully admit that. No doubt a great deal has been said on the subject. It is frequently urged that the plan of sub-letting is very objectionable, and that we ought to give facilities for the recommendations that have been made on the subject to be carried out. I can only say, in respect to the scale of prices for work done under our contracts, that during the time I am in Office I will take care that every consideration shall be given to what has been said by hon. Members on the subject.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) asked whether public tenders were invited for stationery, and, if so, what were the means employed to give publicity? No reference was made in the Votes to quill pens, of which thousands were supplied to the Government Departments. When once they had been dipped in ink they never, so far as he was aware, made a second appearance, and he should like to know what became of them after they had been once used?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT stated that the tenders for stationery used in the Government Departments were invited publicly from all the firms which were on the Stationery Office list. There were several hundreds of these firms, and they each received an invitation. Any firm desiring to be placed on the list sent in an application for that purpose. The quills, after being discarded, were generally remade and used elsewhere; they were not wasted in the way suggested.

Mr. CREMER asked whether the used pens were sold and then re-purchased again?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, they were all utilised. They were not sold and purchased again by the Departments.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked whether, in the contract for paper, there was any condition that the paper should be manufactured in this country?

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, there was not, but about three-fourths of the paper was manufactured in this country. It was not bought, in any case, from foreign firms.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

8. £11,743, to complete the sum for Woods, Forests, and Land Revenues, &c., Office.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.) desired to call attention to the stripping of the Welsh hills of timber by the Office of Woods and Forests for State purposes. He urged upon the right hon. Gentleman that some portion of the revenues of the Department should be devoted to new plantations. He further suggested that a Departmental Committee should be appointed to inquire into the practicability of the re-afforestation of the Welsh hills, and also as to the best methods of carrying out that object. He also asked for information as to the conditions under which mining and sporting rights were granted in Wales. No information was given as to steps taken for the protection of the rights of the public in their own property. Hundreds of thousands sterling had been expended on public property in Wales without any information being given to the public. Another point was that the Woods and Forests Commissioners should not be allowed to alienate public property. One or two circumstances had occurred of what appeared to be gross acts of jobbery, one being in reference to a very interesting old historical ruin. The Woods and Forests Commissioners had actually sold that ruin and the rock on which it stood at Ormsby Gore for £175. That was really an outrage upon the public. He was simply citing that case in illustration. The evidence was given in January last, but no information whatever was given even to the Local Authorities. Though an action had been commenced nothing had been done since in the matter.

Mr. EDWARDS (Radnorshire) stated, that Continental countries were spending millions a year in re-afforesting, and England, being the greatest consumer of timber in Europe, ought to follow that excellent example. Some of the best timber used in the Welsh collieries came from France, and there was no reason why as good timber should not be supplied of native growth. In regard to the letting of sporting rights, the Woods and Forests Commissioners should take the same care of public property as would be taken if it were in private hands, and the best possible price should be obtained by the local agents on behalf of the Department.

Mr. HERBERT LEWIS said, that the rights of the public had been enormously diminished, and it was the duty of the Government to take care that the process should not go on. Steps should also be taken for re-afforestation, because in the past Wales had for national purposes been denuded of its great forests. Since 1851 the Commissioners had sold their ancient charges to the amount of £151,000, and they had only invested out of that a little over £41,000, so that there was a balance due to Wales of £110,000 uninvested. Without going further into the large body of evidence, which could easily be brought forward, he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would grant an inquiry into the matter, in order to prevent the waste at present going on.

*Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, he must congratulate his hon. Friends upon their having a sympathetic Commissioner of Woods who was responsible for the management of property in Wales, and he was glad to be able to say that he had from him a Report on this matter of planting in Wales, which was under consideration at the present time. The Commissioner proposed to make a personal visit to Wales for the purpose of ascertaining by actual inspection in the several localities how far they were suitable for this purpose, and whether the circumstances of soil, and situation, and so forth, offered a reasonable prospect of return on the expenditure. The question had advanced so far, and as the proceedings involved the expenditure of money, they would have to bring the proposal before the Treasury, and it would have to be considered by them. He had suggested that Mr. Stafford Howard should undertake this work; that he should himself be responsible for the work, that he should go down to Wales, visit various portions of it, should hold open inquiries at certain places in different parts of Wales, giving full notice of his visit, and should then ascertain how far the feelings of the inhabitants of the district were in favour of the scheme. He thought hon. Members were to be congratulated on the fact that Mr. Stafford Howard had taken up the question, and he had no doubt he would be able to work it out to something effective, so as to carry out the wishes of the hon. Members who had spoken on the subject. He believed the hon. Member for Carnarvon Boroughs referred to the question of Farren's Quarry, and he was glad to be able to inform him that that quarry was in a better position. It was let for 20 years from the 5th of January, 1890, and the lease expired in 1910. There was a certain rent of £50 a year payable to the Crown. That rent was regularly paid, so of course there was no chance of taking possession of the quarry so as to oust this tenant. The royalties were 1d., 3d., and 6d. per ton on the respective kinds of stone got from the quarry. This lease, it seemed, required two men to be kept at work, and at the date of the latest Report by the Crown Mine Agent seven men were at work. He did not know whether the hon. Member was aware of the fact, but he believed the lessees were in negotiation with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests for the site of a pier to be used in connection with the work of the quarry. If that were so, it looked as if they were intending to work the quarry in a much better way than they had hitherto. Of course, the Crown had other quarries in the neighbourhood which they would be glad to let to other tenants. With regard to the question of the appointment of landowners as stewards, which was raised by one of his hon. Friends, he should be very glad to inquire of and confer with the Commissioner upon the subject. He rather agreed with much that his hon. Friend stated upon the matter, that it was not quite a desirable kind of appointment to make to this kind of work. In respect to the alienation of property in Wales, he did not think the Commissioner would have any desire to do that unless they had had good offers for the property. But he would confer with the Commissioner as to whether any notice should be given of any intention to alienate property. Then there was the question of sporting leases. He had asked for a Report upon that matter, and he was told that in the last six years there had been 15 cases of sporting leases. There had been a renewal of old leases, but no lease was renewed without an independent and fresh valuation. They had relet seven of the old leases, but it was upon a new valuation. In the case of the other eight, those were advertised, but he was sorry to say that the plan of advertising them did not seem to be very successful. For some of these eight no tenders were received at all in answer to the advertisements, and for others there was only one answer, so that in no case was there any competition. What the Commissioner was asked to do was to make as good an arrangement as he could for sporting rights. He could assure his hon. Friends that they had a sympathetic Commissioner, and he trusted they would make use of him whenever he went down to any place for the purpose of making inquiries, and that they would confer with him on the various subjects that came within his province.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said, that on the forestry question he was so thoroughly satisfied with the answer he had received from the right hon. Gentleman that he did not propose to pursue the matter any further. So far as he was concerned, he did not require a Departmental Committee, so long as it was understood that the Commissioner would take the matter up, and have open inquiries in different places. With regard to the quarry, he did not attach any blame to the right hon. Gentleman for what had been done. It was a Unionist job. He understood from the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that there was a pier which the tenant proposed to erect there for the purpose of developing the quarry, and he hoped the Secretary to the Treasury would see that the Commissioners imposed terms upon him in regard to this pier to carry it down to the water's edge. He should like to know, with regard to this old castle there was in Criccieth, whether there was any clause in the deed to preserve the public rights, and, if there was, whether any steps were taken by the Commissioners to protect those rights?

MR. HERBERT LEWIS said, there was just one point to which the right hon. Gentleman had not alluded in his reply, and it was one of very great importance to Wales. Crown property to the value of over £150,000 had been sold in Wales, and the investments only amounted to about £41,000, and he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would bear that fact in mind in dealing with Wales, seeing that Wales had sustained a loss of about £110,000 by the transaction. He begged to thank the right hon. Gentleman most heartily for his reply generally.

MR. EDWARDS said, that while thanking the right hon. Gentleman for the reply which he had given him with regard to the leasing of sporting rights, he should like to ask him to look into the matter carefully, because he found in one case that during the last 20 years the lease had been renewed to the same person. It was clear that the intention of the Woods and Forests Commissioners was that the leases should be open to competition.

*MR. WEIR said, he desired to move the Motion which stood in his name. This was that the Vote should be reduced by the sum of £50, and he did this with the object of getting some information from the right hon. Gentleman regarding the granting of licences for salmon-fishing in the Highlands of Scotland. On the 28th of March of last year he made an effort to get some information on the subject. He was then informed—

> "Much dissatisfaction exists amongst the fishermen around the coasts of Scotland on the subject. The Government have it in contemplation to arrange for licences being granted to fish for salmon, and other fish of the salmon-kind, in places around the coasts of Scotland, where the right of salmon fishing has not been already granted to private individuals."

Later on he asked the Secretary for Scotland another question on the same subject, and the right hon. Gentleman then said—

> "He was glad to say that there was a spirit now in the Office of Works—a reforming spirit he might call it—and since Mr. Stafford Howard had been at work he had shown a desire to adopt a policy which would be pleasing to the House of Commons."

He was very much gratified when he obtained that information from the Secretary for Scotland, but he wanted to know what progress was being made. It was not enough to say that efforts were being made. It was time, since March 1893, that something positive should be done. An advertisement was an excellent mode of intimating these facts, but it was no use advertising in *The Times* or in any other paper which did not come within the reach of the people who were interested in this matter. He would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that notices should be sent round to the post offices, and possibly to the schools. If the notices were sent to Highland schools, there would then be a better opportunity of the parents of the children attending those schools getting information as to the prospect of securing licences for catching salmon, or fish of the salmon kind. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give them such information as would encourage him to withdraw the Motion he had put down, because he had no desire to detain the Committee one moment longer than was necessary. But this was a matter of vital importance to people in his constituency. Prosecutions were taking place every day, and persons were sent to prison because when they were fishing for other kinds of fish a salmon or fish of the salmon kind came into the fisherman's net. He hoped they would have licences freely issued over the Highlands of Scotland, and indeed all round the coasts of Scotland, where the law was so bad that it was a penal offence to take a salmon out of the sea.

*SIR J. T. HIBBERT said, that in reply to his hon. Friend, who thought nothing had been done in this matter, he had to tell him that a great step had been taken, and he must live in hopes of more being done hereafter. Very few of the leases from Crown salmon-fishings had fallen in recently, but the great bulk of them would fall in in November, 1894.

Of those licences for salmon-fishing that had expired 29 were in Argyllshire, 8 in Ayr, 8 in Inverness, and 5 in Ross. Advertisements were inserted in the newspapers in Scotland, in the way most likely to come under the notice of the people most interested, inviting applications for licences, but he was sorry to say that the results in the way of applications were not very satisfactory. Printed lists of the fishings had also been widely circulated. Many inquiries were made, but only two applications had been received for all these licences, and of these one had been granted, and the other was ready for delivery on payment of the fee. That was one step. He had also to inform his hon. Friend that the Commissioner, Mr. Stafford Howard, had himself been to Scotland, and had visited most of the fishings where the leases would fall in in November. He had had meetings with the fishermen and other inhabitants in the villages, and had discussed with them the terms on which the licences for these fishings should be granted. The Commissioner was now preparing a scheme for granting these licences at certain places, and he hoped his hon. Friend would give them some credit for action in this matter.

Mr. WEIR: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell the Committee the number of fishings which will expire in November, 1894?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: No, I have not got that information.

**Mr. WEIR* asked if the right hon. Gentleman had considered the desirability of adopting any other plan than advertising. He had had to admit that advertising in newspapers had not been a success in Wales nor in the northern parts of Scotland, and he begged to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would consider the desirability of testing another plan—that of putting notices into the post offices and schoolhouses?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT said, it was quite impossible for him to supply the hon. Gentleman with all the information he wanted. He had given him all he possessed.

Mr. WEIR: If I put a question on the Paper, and give the right hon. Gentleman due notice, will he be able to furnish me with the information?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: If the hon. Gentleman will write me a note, it will be much more effective than putting a question.

Mr. A. C. MORTON (Peterborough): Is the right hon. Gentleman able to say whether these licences are granted for a long number of years? I want to know whether the effect of them is to tie up the property for a long number of years?

Sir J. T. HIBBERT: They are granted for a short term of years.

Vote agreed to.

9. £28,566, to complete the sum for Works and Public Buildings Office.

Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said, he desired to ask a question of the First Commissioner of Works. The Committee would remember that some weeks ago he put a question to the right hon. Gentleman as to whether there could not be added to the statues of a historic character which they already had a statue of Oliver Cromwell, and the way in which that question was received in the House, and the notice——

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that this cannot be gone into. It does not arise on this Vote.

Mr. WEIR: I believe the Motion standing in my name is out of Order.

The CHAIRMAN: It is.

Mr. WEIR: Then I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £50 in order that I may say a word or two respecting the First Commissioner of Works.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member can ask a question without moving any reduction of the Vote.

Dr. CLARK: I would suggest to my hon. Friend, seeing the late hour at which we have now arrived, the desirability of raising the matter on the Report stage.

***Mr. WEIR**: I am quite willing to take that course.

Vote agreed to.

10. £16,000, to complete the sum for Secret Service.

Mr. A. C. MORTON said, he did not rise to move any reduction of the Vote or to detain the Committee for more than a minute. He wished simply to say what he had always said on this Vote. He protested against this Vote for Secret Service, because it was used for corrupt purposes.

Mr. TOMLINSON said, that this Vote illustrated the injury done to the

Public Service by keeping back the Estimates till discussion was impossible. It was a perfect scandal that a Vote like this should pass absolutely without discussion, but in the present state of the House no effective discussion could take place. There were many questions on which public discussion was desirable and he hoped that some steps would be taken to allow this particular subject to be discussed on Report.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, he wished to supplement the protest of his hon. Friend against the delay in bringing on the Estimates. They had to deal with a Revenue of something like £100,000,000 sterling, and he did think it ought to be arranged to take Supply the first thing in the Session, leaving the ornamental part of their work for later. It was positively indecent the way in which the work was now done.

Vote agreed to.

11. £3,155, to complete the sum for Lunacy Commission, Scotland.

12. £2,470, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Scotland.

13. £4,754, to complete the sum for Board of Supervision for Relief of the Poor, and for Public Health, Scotland.

14. £2,264, to complete the sum for Household of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

15. £939, to complete the sum for Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

16. £3,007, to complete the sum for Public Record Office, Ireland.

17. £19,770, to complete the sum for Public Works Office, Ireland.

18. £8,637, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Ireland.

19. £5,171, to complete the sum for Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland.

CLASS III.

20. £25,782 (including a Supplementary sum of £3,000), to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Legal Expenses.

21. £177,874, to complete the sum for Supreme Court of Judicature.

22. £3,771, to complete the sum for Land Registry.

23. £18,062, to complete the sum for County Courts.

24. £2,748, to complete the sum for Police Courts, London and Sheerness.

25. Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £34,435, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1895, for the Salaries of the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners of the Metropolitan Police, and of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, the Pay and Expenses of Officers of Metropolitan Police employed on special duties, and the Salaries and Expenses of the Inspectors of Constabulary."

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.) said, he had to bring forward a question which, although at first sight appeared to be a purely local matter, was one of general interest. But was it advisable to bring it on so late in the Sitting?

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: The hon. Member might raise it on Report.

CAPTAIN NORTON: If the right hon. Gentleman is prepared to reply to me I am willing to go on with it now.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: As there is no representative of the Home Office present could not the hon. Member defer his remarks until the Report stage?

CAPTAIN NORTON: Perhaps I had better move to report Progress.

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: It is of the utmost importance that the business before the Committee should be got on with, and I hope that the hon. and gallant Member will allow the Vote to be taken and reserve his remarks on it for the Report stage.

MR. PICKERSGILL said, he considered that any discussion on this Vote should take place in Committee. He hoped, therefore, that the Vote would be postponed in the absence of any representative of the Home Office.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Captain Norton.*)

SIR J. T. HIBBERT: I hope the Motion will not be pressed. The Under Secretary for the Home Office will be here in a few minutes.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I will withdraw the Motion then, and proceed with my remarks.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

*CAPTAIN NORTON said, he was sorry to disturb either the Home Secretary or Under Secretary, but he had made a special journey from the Continent in order to go into this matter, and it would be most inconvenient if it were not taken that evening. He hoped, therefore, the Committee would excuse him for the action he was taking, action which also found its justification in the importance of the Force with which he had to deal. The Metropolitan Police Force was the largest Police Force in existence; it cost £1,500,000 sterling annually; it did duty over a district covering a radius of 15 miles from Charing Cross; it protected property of immense value, something like £37,000,000 sterling; it patrolled 8,000 miles of streets, and was responsible for the safety and well-being of 5,500,000 of inhabitants, drawn, like the Force itself, from all parts of the United Kingdom. London was practically the trade centre of the globe, and the thousands of foreigners who annually visited the city were loud in their praise of the magnificent service performed by the Force. Members of that body had over and over again proved that their physical and moral courage was at as high a level as their splendid physique. It might be asked of him, "Why this praise of the police?" His reply was that it was in order to cut off one line of retreat for the Treasury Bench. He had noticed during the short time he had been in the House that the Members of the Front Bench, when they were unwilling to deal with an admitted grievance, or when they had no argument to urge, retired behind a cloud of skirmishes in the shape of praise towards the aggrieved. He stated not long since that considerable dissatisfaction had for a long time prevailed among the police with the system whereby the Force was provided with boots. That statement of his was contradicted, but as he had hundreds of the men resident in his constituency, he had personally investigated scores of cases. He had asked for an independent inquiry into the matter, so as to decide once and for all who wanted to enter for the "Ananias" stakes, but he was told that no such inquiry would be tolerated, because it would be subversive of discipline. He ventured to suggest that discipline would in no way be affected by it, and he appealed to hon. Members who had spent years in the Regular Forces to say that that suggestion was confirmed by their own experience. Again, he was told that the men could make complaints through their officers with reference to a matter of that kind, but he ventured to reply to that, that such a thing would not be tolerated in any properly-disciplined Force, and, indeed, no man would so complain unless he was assured that the complaint would be welcomed not only by officers high in authority, but by every officer, even down to the lowest grade. The contracts for police boots had been made for five years, whereas the Army contracts were given out for one year only. He on one occasion asked the reason for making the contract for so long a period, and the Home Secretary, owing to the replies put into his hands by the Police Authorities, had, in his opinion, made himself extremely ridiculous in the eyes of the House and of the public by stating that it was desirable, so that the boots might be delivered before they were required and the leather thus have time to season. Any expert in the leather trade would admit that leather was practically at its best when it left the hands of the producer, and leather merchants did not find it desirable to stock themselves largely in advance of their requirements. How was it that the Army high-low at 10s. 6d. was found to be superior to the police boot, which cost 11s. 11d.? It might be said that it was not superior, but those who wore the shoe best knew where it pinched, and men in the Police Force who had also served in the Army—as many of them had—were unanimous that the Army boot was far superior to the police boot. Perhaps it would be said that the latter was made of leather of a superior quality, and was better suited for the special purpose for which it was required, but here again the men's experience was very different, and their view was confirmed by the public, because both classes of boots were frequently sold to outside dealers, and while the Army high-low fetched 7s. or 8s. when retailed to the public, the police boot only realised 5s. or 6s. He would suggest that the difference both in quality and price was due to the system of contracting. Contracts for Army hand-sewn high-lows were divided amongst 30 firms, and were limited to one year. It was therefore clearly to the interest of the Army contractors to supply as good a class of boot as the price given would allow them to do, in order to secure a renewal of, and if possible an increased order for the next year. Furthermore, the boots were passed by a Board of experts. On the other hand, the police boot contract ran for five years, and the goods supplied were passed by an individual who was called an examiner, and who was a practical bootmaker. He received 1d. per pair for passing the boots. He had to pass something like 30,000 pairs a year, value about £18,000, and had to support his wife and family and pay his travelling expenses out of less than £150 a year. He had no intention of casting any reflections on the character of that distinguished artificer, but he ventured to suggest that a contractor who knew his business would be a strange man if he did not induce such an individual to pass any boots he chose to lay before him. An hon. Friend had just informed him that the examiner was not an artificer, but that he was a traveller for a large house, who thus employed his spare time. Then the hon. Member quite understood how the boots were passed. The Examiner was informed by telegram that a given number of boots required to be passed; he at once put in an appearance, and after a sumptuous mid-day repast proceeded with his task. A pair of boots was placed in his hands—no doubt they had been carefully selected—and having examined them, he urbanely remarked, "I do not know how you do it for the money," and, on the principle of *Ex uno disce omnes*, proceeded to pass the whole lot on the strength of the one submitted pair. He would suggest that the boots should in future be passed in the same way as the Army boots. He was not attacking the boots: it was the system he was complaining of, and in justice to one firm, Messrs. Pocock Brothers, one of the two firms of contractors, he was bound to say that the complaints of quality which he had personally investigated did not apply to boots supplied by them. Taking the 20 largest municipalities in the Kingdom, he found that in 17 the police were made a "boot allowance," and that the contract system had been tried and failed. The City of London Police had such an allowance; the amount was 3s. a month. He was not asking so much for the Metropolitan Police; he only suggested that they should receive the contract price. That system had been tried on two occasions during the last 10 or 12 years, and had worked satisfactorily both to the men and to the authorities. In 16 out of 20 Municipalities as to which he had obtained information the men received allowances varying from 24s. to 32s. a year, and in the Royal Irish Constabulary it was 26s., and he was told by Sir Andrew Reed that that gave complete satisfaction to him and to the men under his command. An objection had been made that under such a system the men would not supply themselves with suitable boots, that they would purchase cheap articles and spend the balance of the money in debauchery. But he believed they would do nothing of the kind; that they would have too much consideration for their own health and comfort. He had been asked why, if the boot allowance system were such a good one, it was not applied to the Army? But the cases were different. The Army was largely recruited from youths in their teens, who were not competent to provide themselves with suitable boots, and moreover it would be subversive of discipline to have men constantly running into the town in order to see the bootmaker, nor would it be desirable to have competing tradesmen constantly over-running the barracks. Moreover, troops required large supplies of boots when on active and foreign service when the contract was the only possible system. The policeman was in a totally different position. As a rule, he was a man of mature years with home responsibilities, and he was likely to study carefully his own health, and as he had to be continually walking about the streets he would see that his boots properly fitted him, for he could not resort to the shifts employed by the soldier on active service, such as the cutting of his boots, and so forth, nor could he be placed on some duty which would not necessitate his being much upon his feet when he became foot sore. He was bound to do from eight to ten hours out of every 24 on duty in the streets. He had to thank the Home Secretary for the extreme courtesy he had displayed in answering his applications for information on this matter, but he fully recognised that the right hon. Gentleman, having such multifarious and onerous duties to perform, could not personally investigate these matters. Since Sir E. Bradford, one of the best Police Commissioners they had ever had, found that it was impossible to supply the men with suitable boots by means of contracts he thought that proved the case. Even if the quality of the leather was good, any man would prefer a cheap boot of inferior leather that suited his requirements to a boot at double the price and of superior leather which did not. The real fact was that the contract system for boots had been a failure. Upon several occasions he had had to make some inquiries about this contract. He had inquired whether it would be laid upon the Table of the House, or whether a copy of the contract could not be furnished him. From the difficulty which he had experienced in getting at the document, anybody might have supposed that it was a foreign Treaty of the highest Imperial importance. Amongst other things, he asked whether he might be allowed to take down the terms of the contract, and at last he was permitted to go to the Home Office and examine this precious document. He had been told by the Home Secretary that there was no question of bringing the contract to an end until the expiration of the period for which it was made. It seemed to him that what information the Home Secretary had got might as well have been told to the horse marines, as, for example, that leather improved by keeping, whereas they all knew that leather perished by the lapse of time. He should argue that the contract ought to be terminated. Then he wanted a distinct pledge that as soon as the contract expired the members of the Metropolitan Police should receive an allowance at the present rate which was paid for boots. That was not a very great concession to demand. There would be no difficulty in arranging the matter once such pledge was given. He hoped he might not be driven to take a Division upon the reduction of the Vote he had thought it necessary to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item A, Salaries, be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Chief Commissioner of Metropolitan Police."—(*Captain Norton.*)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, North Beds.) stated that his hon. Friend might be satisfied with having made a convert so far as the individual Member of the Government now speaking was concerned. The attention of the Home Office had been directed to this subject, and his hon. Friend's efforts had brought about a considerable change in their point of view. Undoubtedly, it was a more ideally perfect arrangement that one's boots should be adapted to one's feet than one's feet to one's boots. That seemed the elementary philosophy of the subject. As far as the sentiments of the Force were concerned, he found, from inquiries made in his individual capacity as a citizen, that his hon. Friend was right. He found that, having a good deal of human nature in their composition and anatomy, many members of the Force agreed in preferring the system which adapted the works of art to the works of nature. He found, further, that in the municipal towns the system almost universally prevailed of allowing the men to purchase their own boots. The only difficulty, then, lay in the matter of existing contracts. Supposing it appeared that there was a terminable clause in them, though he was not aware that there was, it would be for the Home Secretary to consider the question of terminating the contracts as suggested. If not, the contracts would expire three years hence, and he might say there was no intention on the part of the present administrators at the Home Office to renew them. The ultimate decision in the matter must rest with the Home Secretary of three years hence, and the obvious moral was that his hon. Friends should do their utmost to keep Her Majesty's advisers in their present places.

*CAPTAIN NORTON said, he would withdraw his Amendment, and he desired to thank the Under Secretary for the Home Department for his courteous and satisfactory answers and his witty speech. But would he give a definite pledge, on behalf of the Home Office, that when the existing contracts expired the system of boot money would be introduced?

*MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: Yes, Sir, subject, obviously, to the condition that we are in Office. We cannot, of course, bind others. But if we are in Office when the contracts expire, I believe they will not be renewed.

MR. JOHN BURNS said, he hoped that when the system of money in lieu of boots was introduced the money would be so distributed that the men would receive it in proportion to the wear of boots by each man, and that there would be no distribution of a uniform amount, otherwise, those whose boots lasted longer than others would have the price of two or three pairs to put into their pockets, at the expense of the ratepayers.

*Sir A. ROLLIT said, the system of supplying money in lieu of boots had worked well in most of our large Municipalities. That had been the experience in Hull, where both systems had been practically tried, and he had a letter from the Chairman of the Watch Committee there saying that the allowance was better and more economical than the supply of boots.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked what was being done with reference to the provision of matrons for the Metropolitan police stations?

*Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: I know that the Secretary of State is fully alive to the desirability of introducing this alteration of system, but I am not in a position to say that such an alteration is to be made. I am convinced that my hon. Friend may be satisfied that the change will be introduced if the circumstances admit.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

26. £361,139, to complete the sum for Prisons, England and the Colonies.

Mr. JOHN BURNS wished to ask the Under Secretary for the Home Department whether it was the fact that, whereas the number of warders in Holloway Prison was supposed to be 20, it was nearer 11 or 13? He thought it was a matter for regret that, owing to the time when the Vote was taken, Members of the House who had been in prison, and others who expected to go to prison, had no real opportunity of discussing the question of the severe and sometimes brutal way in which our prisons were administered.

*Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL said, that if his hon. Friend could give him instances where the staff was insufficient they should be at once looked into. He shared his hon. Friend's regret that the subject was not reached till the end of the Session.

Vote agreed to.

The following Votes were agreed to:—

27. £137,117, to complete the sum for Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.

28. £18,903, to complete the sum for Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum.

29. £44,998, to complete the sum for Law Charges and Courts of Law, Scotland.

30. £22,711, to complete the sum for Register House, Edinburgh.

31. £51,700, to complete the sum for Prisons, Scotland.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1892-3.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. That it appears by the Navy Appropriation Account for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1893, and the statement appended thereto, as follows, namely:—

(a.) That the gross expenditure for certain Navy Services exceeded the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £397,516 19s. 3d., as shown in Column No. 1 of the Schedule hereto appended; while the gross expenditure for other Navy Services fell short of the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £333,471 3s. 2d., as shown in Column No. 2 of the said appended Schedule, so that the gross actual expenditure for the whole of the Navy Services exceeded the gross estimated expenditure by the net sum of £64,045 16s. 1d.;

(b.) That the receipts in aid of certain Navy Services fell short of the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £59,395 18s. 6d., as shown in Column No. 3 of the said appended Schedule; while the receipts in aid of other Navy Services exceeded the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £37,693 3s. 4d., as shown in Column No. 4 of the said appended Schedule; so that the total actual receipts in aid of the Grants for Navy Services fell short of the total estimated receipts by the net sum of £21,702 15s. 2d.;

(c.) That the resulting differences between the Exchequer Grants for Navy Services and the net expenditure are as follows, namely:—

	£	s.	d.
Total Surpluses...	309,270	1	6
Total Deficits ...	395,018	12	9

2. That the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have temporarily authorised the application, in reduction of the net charge on Exchequer Grants for certain Navy Services, of the whole of the sums received in excess of the estimated Appropriations in Aid, in respect of the same Services; and have also temporarily authorised the application of so much of the said total surpluses on certain Grants for Navy Services as is necessary to cover the said total deficits on other Grants for Navy Services.

3. Resolved, That the application of such sums be sanctioned.

SCHEDULE.

Number of Vote.	Navy Services, 1892-93. Votes.	Gross Expenditure.		Appropriations in Aid.	
		Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure. 1.	Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure. 2.	Deficiencies of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 3.	Surpluses of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 4.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1 ...	Wages &c. of Officers, Seamen, and Boys, Coastguard and Royal Marines	...	20,842 10 10	...	3,431 6 11
2 ...	Victualling and Clothing for the Navy	...	26,161 17 1	34,644 18 6	
3 ...	Medical Establishments and Services	6,482 16 10	...	...	47 7 2
4 ...	Martial Law ...	...	967 7 1	14 11 1	
5 ...	Educational Services	441 2 10	...	...	1,248 11 0
6 ...	Scientific Services	...	2,363 12 0	1,380 7 6	
7 ...	Royal Naval Reserves	13,008 3 6	...	...	11 13 5
8 ...	Shipbuilding, Repairs, Maintenance, &c.:				
Sec. 1 ...	Personnel ...	19,406 2 5	...	6,199 7 3	
Sec. 2 ...	Materiel ...	75,885 3 2	...	...	10,678 9 9
Sec. 3 ...	Contract Work	...	235,106 6 6	5,565 6 10	
9 ...	Naval Armaments	247,419 0 5	...	...	11,935 15 1
10 ...	Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad	...	46,260 5 11	5,575 18 3	
11 ...	Miscellaneous Effective Services	26,131 14 5	...	119 15 9	
12 ...	Admiralty Office	1,575 10 9	...	...	2 0 0
13 ...	Half-Pay, Reserved and Retired Pay	3,260 8 11	...	2,110 9 10	
14 ...	Naval and Marine Pensions, Gratuities, and Compassionate Allowances	2,777 8 8	...	3,748 3 6	
15 ...	Civil Pensions and Gratuities	...	1,769 3 9	37 0 0	
16 ...	Additional Naval Force for Service in Australasian Waters ...	42 16 0	...	...	10,338 0 0
	Amount written off as irrecoverable	1,086 11 4			
		397,516 19 3	333,471 3 2	59,395 18 6	37,693 3 4

Net Deficit, £64,045 16 1 Net Deficit, £21,702 15 2

Total Deficit	£85,748 11 3
Net sum due from the Naval Defence Account, under 52 Vic., c. 8, s. 3 (2)...	277,624 16 6
Net sum to be surrendered to the Exchequer	£191,876 5 3

4. That it appears by the Army Appropriation Account for the year ended the 31st day of March, 1893, and the statement appended thereto, as follows, namely :—

(a.) That the gross expenditure for certain Army Services exceeded the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £240,292 11s. 8d., as shown in Column No. 1 of the Schedule hereto appended; while the gross expenditure for other Army Services fell short of the Estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £256,441 10s. 8d., as shown in Column No. 2 of the said appended Schedule; so that the gross actual expenditure for the whole of the Army Services fell short of the gross estimated expenditure by the net sum of £16,148 19s.;

(b.) That the receipts in aid of certain Army Services fell short of the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £59,773 1s. 6d., as shown in Column No. 3 of the said appended Schedule; while the receipts in aid of other Army Services exceeded the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £102,051 16s. 9d., as shown in Column No. 4 of the said appended Schedule; so that the total actual receipts in aid of the Grants for Army Services exceeded the total estimated receipts by the net sum of £42,278 15s. 3d.;

(c.) That the resulting differences between the Exchequer Grants for Army Services and the net expenditure are as follows, namely :—

	£	s.	d.
Total Surpluses...	255,450	4	11
Total Deficits ...	197,022	10	8

5. That the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have temporarily authorised the application, in reduction of the net charge on Exchequer Grants for certain Army Services, of the whole of the sums received in excess of the estimated appropriations in aid, in respect of the same Services, and have also temporarily authorised the application of so much of the said total surpluses on certain Grants for Army Services as is necessary to cover the said total deficits on other Grants for Army Services.

6. Resolved, That the application of such sums be sanctioned.

SCHEDULE.

No. of Vote.	Army Services, 1892-93. Votes.	Gross Expenditure.		Appropriations in Aid.	
		Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure. 1.	Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure. 2.	Deficiencies of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 3.	Surpluses of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 4.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1	Pay, &c., of Army (General Staff, Regiments, Reserve, and Departments)	...	33,459 5 11	...	39,616 17 10
2	Medical Establishments : Pay, &c. ...	...	2,598 12 0	137 16 1	
3	Militia : Pay and Allowances	47,273 7 8	...	...	985 9 3
4	Yeomanry Cavalry : Pay and Allowances	...	997 5 1	4 12 1	
5	Volunteer Corps : Pay and Allowances	...	3,880 8 9	...	336 13 8
6	Transport and Remounts	5,284 16 6	...	415 19 7	
7	Provisions, Forage, and other Supplies	91,415 18 10	...	...	8,624 7 10
8	Clothing Establishments, and Services	65,292 12 1	...	...	28,108 6 2
9	Warlike and other Stores : Supply and Repair...	...	158,099 10 2	52,982 13 8	
10	Works, Buildings, and Repairs : Cost, including Superintending Establishment	...	31,409 7 3	...	3,858 14 9
11	Military Educational Establishments : Pay and Miscellaneous Charges ...	...	5,663 3 7	6,211 9 0	
12	Miscellaneous Effective Services ...	...	4,608 5 2	20 11 1	
13	War Office : Salaries and Miscellaneous Charges	456 8 3	...	...	6 13 4
14	Non-effective Charges for Officers, &c.	...	15,725 12 9	...	14,005 4 6
15	Non-effective Charges for Men, &c. ...	27,103 6 3	...	...	6,262 5 2
16	Superannuation, Compensation, and Compassionate Allowances... ...	2,563 1 5	...	...	247 4 3
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		240,292 11 8	256,441 10 8	59,773 1 6	102,051 16 9

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Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 16th August, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put till Monday next.

House adjourned at a quarter before Ten o'clock till Monday next.

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TO

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION).

VOLUME XXVIII. FOURTH SERIES.

SEVENTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1894.

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A. Answers.
c. Commons.
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